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# F-TRAINING R MOTHERS

BY

## S. BURTON CHANCE

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# SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS

BY

MRS. BURTON CHANCE

AUTHOR OF "THE CARE OF THE CHILD," "MOTHER AND DAUGHTER," ETC.



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"And what is writ, is writ—would it were worthier."  
—BYRON.

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## PREFACE

THE aim of this book is to help the mother in a simple and practical way to meet such questions as these:

How can I bring to my work the greatest amount of physical and mental efficiency?

What can I do to make home a real influence?

What books should the children read, when should they begin school, can I guide their friendships and amusements?

What kind of discipline counts?

Ought the children be made to go to church?

Is it right to insist that they shall bear their share of the burden and responsibility of keeping up the home?

How shall boys and girls be fitted, while children, to be in their turn true home-builders?

These, and a multitude of other questions of the same nature, come to every mother, and it is not by any means easy to answer them. True vision and keen, sympathetic judgment are fruits of the trained mind. That the mother's mind is not always trained to the service she has undertaken is why she sometimes fails to do her work in the very best way it can be done.

## PREFACE

The endeavor of this book is to show how the busy mother can save time to develop her personality and to cultivate her emotional and intellectual life. For only by self-training can she bring to her work the high type of practical efficiency necessary to success.

Several chapters of this book have appeared in magazine form. My thanks are due therefore to the editors of the *Mother's Magazine*, the *Philadelphia Press*, and others for their courteous permission to reprint them. I must also thank the many authors and publishers who have so very kindly allowed me to use quotations and excerpts from their books.

MARIA SCOTT BEALE CHANCE.

RADNOR, PA., October 15, 1914.

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# SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS

## I

### WHAT QUALITIES MAKE A GOOD MOTHER?

"The wise educator is never one who is 'educating' from morning to night. She is one, who, unconsciously to the children, brings to them the chief sustenance and creates the supreme conditions of their growth. Primarily she is the one who, through the serenity and wisdom of her own nature is dew and sunshine to growing souls. She is one who understands how to demand in just measure, and to give at the right moment. She is one whose desire is law, whose smile is reward, whose disapproval is punishment, whose caress is benediction."

—ELLEN KEY.

"Long as the heart beats life within her breast  
Thy child will bless thee, guardian mother mild  
And far away thy memory will be blessed  
By children of the children of thy child."

THIS is Queen Victoria's tribute to her mother! Lord Tennyson wrote the words at her request, for inscription upon a statue of the Duchess of Kent.

## SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS

Thus the great Queen and Empress publicly revered her noble mother, and thus every child should be able to bless in his heart his own "guardian mother," whose memory and influence reigned in his life, and were handed down through him to the "children of the children of his child."

Every one longs to be remembered, but influence is no hap-hazard thing, to be had for the asking. It is not the result of a sudden tearful waking up to failure, nor can it flower in an instant, however hard we grieve and pray.

Influence—true influence, which projects through the mother into her child and on indefinitely to the widening circles of her race, is the harvest of a careful time of seed-sowing. It can not be got suddenly, it can not be bought or shammed, it is a *result*.

I often think of the child as a vine. The vine shoots out a number of feelers, and only those feelers mount which find something to mount upon. Otherwise they trail aimlessly along the ground.

The mother who is going to be remembered by "the children of the children of her child" is the mother who presents in her own personality something upon which the strongest feelers her children put out can take hold upon and mount.

The vine, by the very reason of its nature, is

## WHAT QUALITIES MAKE A GOOD MOTHER?

quick to proceed as directed by something higher and more permanent than itself. A child can not grow quickly, normally, happily, and eternally, unless he follows the lead of a stronger soul. To fit herself to be the standard for the vine is the true work of motherhood. Influence is the unconscious product of a life lived with a sense of such consecration.

Now, while in the heat of the day, while yet malleable, is the time for us to ask ourselves what qualities live longest in influence; for very soon our limitations harden around us like a plaster cast. Then it is already too late to become anything new. The golden time for self-knowledge and self-improvement is when the children are little, when our problems are still new and interesting, and we go forward to meet them with the courage, initiative, and enthusiasm of youth. Then, because we are still plastic, we can learn to do or be, well anything! But after a while it becomes very different and because we have not sown in time, there is no harvest.

One of the first characteristics to produce influence in a woman is a willingness to be herself. The craze for imitation has wrecked many splendid natures. The pitiful sight of a life dominated by the thought of what "people will say," is common. Women blindly put vices and clamps upon their own natures in an endeavor to shape themselves accord-

## SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS

ing to somebody's else pattern, and make absolute ciphers of themselves by trying to become something they were never intended to be.

Go into the street of small houses—is not every window the same as every other window? In the big shops, do not the girls seem even to *try* to efface their individualities by adopting the same arrangement of the hair; by wearing precisely the same type of jewelry, the same cut of lace collar, the same round locket suspended on the same length of imitation gold chain?

It is the woman who does her hair in a way that is becoming to her own face, no matter how other people do theirs; who has ideas about her front curtains that make her windows different from her neighbor's; it is the woman who, in other words, has the courage to be herself, it is she whom we find standing out against the light and shadow of family life as a real person, and handing on her influence through her children to the generations that are to come.

It never really pays to copy other people. A woman may make a very poor imitation of some other woman and yet have the power to be a strong helpful personality along her own lines. One ounce of that mysterious thing called personality is worth pounds of imitation when it comes to generating

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influence. One may even have one's fine points entirely blotted out by years of unconscious imitation of an admired friend. Imitation is fatal to individual development.

I know two cousins, both married, both with three little children. One is strong, vigorous, impelling; the other frail, delicate, and bound by years of willing moral servitude to the much loved stronger soul. As I study the more yielding nature, I often feel that it has gradually become only a pane of glass through which the other radiant dominating face looks out. The children are suffering because to them is applied the ideals which govern the animal-like robustness of their little cousins. In her effort to bring her children up as they are being brought up, this delicate mother meets innumerable obstacles—differences in character, disposition, and environment which she refuses to see! If she would throw off the yoke of imitation, and be *herself* there would be none of the friction which now leaves her a nervous wreck at the end of the day. Her influence would be greater if she would teach her children to revolve around herself. Instead she tries harder every year to attach them to a system which they were not created to join and where they look and feel and are out of place.

To gain influence one must be self-reliant, not imitative, and beware of imposing a line of treat-

## **SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS**

ment or discipline upon children simply because it has proved effective elsewhere!

We women have many hereditary faults. Love of ease, caprice, self-indulgence, vacillation of purpose, indecision, hastiness of speech—these are ours and have been ours throughout the ages. And unfortunately the very simplicity and directness of the child's mind cause him to rebel instinctively against them.

He is all single-purposed energy with desires well pointed toward a definite goal. He resents injustice, whims, or fancies. He can not understand depression, why our enthusiasms grow suddenly cold, our tempers vague, our commands and indulgences variable. He recognizes no law in us, therefore he withholds his allegiance. He waits and watches us out of the keen adorable candor of his open soul.

Watching, he begins to judge. Now is the time to show him what we are made of; now is the time to compel his allegiance, to make him see by the work of every day that in us his little soul has found its true captain, and that under our colors he may safely sail. This is influence.

Self-control helps in gaining influence. Self-control helps us to marshal our forces to the best advantage. It helps us also to keep the weak points in our defence in the background. This, unfor-

## **WHAT QUALITIES MAKE A GOOD MOTHER?**

tunately, we do not always do, and the children suffer.

Every day, we act and say things, which we regret. How self-control, if only used in time, would have helped! Self-control gains for the irritable temper just the necessary moment for reflection, only a moment, and yet in it balance and cheerfulness are regained.

By very reason that she is *herself*, all a woman's virtues, however beautiful and gentle, have, without self-control, an inherent tendency to be spasmodic, governed by circumstances, dependent upon health. With self-control, time is gained, sense of proportion and that little instant before speech which is so indispensable. Only by virtue of self-control can the mother keep her vagaries hidden within herself, and ease the atmosphere, surcharged as it so often is with the warring little personalities of her own creating.

People often say that it is "instinctive" in woman to be a good mother. This may perhaps be true to a certain extent, but instinct is proverbially blind, and it is safe to temper instinct with knowledge.

The "instinctively" good mother wonders tearfully if it could have been the red sourball or the canned corn or the strong tea that made her baby "sick"! The mother who has added knowledge to

## **SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS**

instinct understands her baby's digestive tract just as practically as she understands the mysteries of cutting out a pinafore or baking a cake, and she makes no mistakes. She has learned that it is neither necessary nor worth while to make mistakes.

We often hear one man say admiringly of another, "He's right on his job." We mothers should be the same; it pays to study our job and learn to do it the very best way it can be done. It is fatal to rely upon instinct, for instinct without knowledge is a broken reed.

I often think of mothers as wireless towers, with the little voyagers they send out communicating with them day and night in the mysterious speechless way. It is for the mother to keep her tower in order and the sensitive instrument alert and ready to receive each faltering message. Sympathy and love help in doing this, but so does knowledge. Think how a woman studies to become an artist or a musician, yet to become a good mother she relies upon vague instinct and gives it little aid.

Results follow organization. Children respond best to a definite plan. Their lives need organization. A garden to be successful must be laid out in certain well-formed groups with forethought and intelligence. Children, also, must have their lives planned, they must be guided by thought as well as instinct.

## WHAT QUALITIES MAKE A GOOD MOTHER?

If we would have influence, we must lead devoted, simple, and often self-sacrificing lives. Children are the keenest judges of character. They scorn counterfeits. Do not for one moment think that they will be deceived by handsome clothes, costly toys, and an occasional "peep" into the nursery, for it is not so. Their love must be earned, and their admiration won by something real. The mother who is a mother, and who takes the thread of her child's life into her hands from the moment he is born, and guides and guards and strengthens it, will gain from him that treasure besides which mountains of gold are as nothing, his honest, steadfast and enduring love. It is worth trying for, for life holds no deeper or more enduring joy.

There is a simple, cricket-like little virtue which chirps cheerily in the home where there is a successful mother, and oh, how it helps! It is not a great or noble thing; it is not a star to be snatched from the high heavens for the ultimate glory of the mother's crown, it is only a little virtue, a little habit of daily life, not much, and yet in many ways hard to win and when won often proving itself a strong and invincible ally—it is cheerfulness.

"It is worth a thousand pounds a year to have the habit of looking on the bright side of things," says Samuel Johnson.

## **SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS**

Did you ever sit in a crowded street car and look at the people opposite, and wonder what they are really like? Nothing is more fascinating! But the study reveals one astonishing fact—hardly a woman but has lines in her face of nervous strain and irritability; yet many of these women are adored wives and much-loved mothers! How strange it is! Where is the halo of the serene sanctified life, the peace of the satisfied soul, the tender light, the clear undisturbed happiness of the well-beloved?

Try to be cheerful if only for the sake of those who must look into your face to find the blessing, inspiration, and happiness of every day. Can it possibly give them these if scarred, lined, furrowed, cross?

Cheerfulness is greatly a matter of *point of view*. Much depends upon the answer each woman gives to the question, "What is my struggle for—am I here to dodge duty and to lead as easy and comfortable a life as I can; or to make character, and fit myself for a continued and higher existence?"

To look upon the events of every day as the material God sends, the material He means us to have with which to make our lives, and to accept such events, through their very difficulty, as being a test of one's mettle, is, I believe, the only point of view which secures cheerfulness under the daily strain

## WHAT QUALITIES MAKE A GOOD MOTHER?

that comes to all. It is the point of view of faith. Not a faith which accepts in the spirit of "of course *I* couldn't expect anything else," but a very wide and far-seeing faith, which realizes the plan underlying each circumstance of life, which accepts the heat of the crucible willingly, seeing ahead the divine shape of the ultimate purified soul, fully realizing that it is all worth while.

James Whitcomb Riley with his inimitable whimsical sweetness sets forth a very valuable philosophy in these words :

"It ain't no use to grumble and complain;  
It's just as cheap and easy to rejoice.  
When God sorts out the weather and sends rain,  
Why rain's my choice."

Cheerfulness is rather more often than we would admit a matter of self-control. One can always train one's self to look at the best side of the day's event. One can make it a matter of self-discipline that the regretted word is checked, the ominous fears remain unspoken, and the threatening frown is banished. I know a woman whom nothing has helped to remain cheerful under the petty exactions of each day as much as the words of Omar to the effect that all will soon be "with Yesterday's Seven Thousand Years." The words rang in her ears during a painful operation, and she repeated to herself again and

## SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS

again, "it will all soon be over and with Yesterday's Seven Thousand Years. The only thing that matters is how I meet my trial because *that* is indestructible."

Or, as Priscilla Leonard puts it:

"No man can choose what coming hours may bring  
To him of need, of joy, of suffering;  
But what his soul shall bring unto each hour  
To meet its challenge—this is in his power."

Why should we associate the "positive" quality with man rather than woman? Nothing helps the mother of a little family of lusty boys and girls more effectively than positiveness. Not crossness, or argumentativeness, neither of which leads to anything but separation; but pure, loyal, just *positiveness*; expressed in character, not in criticism; in daily living, not in empty words.

The "positive" father has well-thought-out views upon politics, religion, love, business, right and wrong, and every other question that involves decision and action. Why should not the mother have the same? A little exertion of her will gives this great advantage into her hands. Directness, self-assurance, knowledge of and a kind speaking of the truths of life, these lead her children to know "what mother will say" even before they ask, and this knowledge, though they are unconscious of it, is their

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guide through all the personal struggles of their life. She is positive in her construction of right and wrong, of mine and thine, of all the details of inner and personal life; not vacillating or changing, as the wind may blow, like a spoiled and petted child.

A "positive" mother admits of no deviation, however slight, from that which she believes to be right and honorable; she leaves her children the most blessed of all gifts—that of inherited high principle. It is when children first push out into the wider fields of life and are assailed by all kinds of temptation and mistrust, that the mother whose simple directness has bounded their home, stands out like a beacon. She now assumes the position of a second conscience. Her personality, character, and example unite to guard them and establish in them for all time the virtues which she has been cultivating within herself even as they, too, grew.

Probably the mother's most enduring gift to her children is courage. The true mother should be before all else an infuser of courage. This, in her, will help more than any material advantage. Courage is a kind of spiritual candle at which a hundred little tapers may be lit and it remains the same bright and fortifying star. Courage is magnetic. We instantly feel it and all that is good in us responds. We are up in arms at once to receive its

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inspiration and do its will. Discouragement, on the other hand, drains strength away even to its last red drop, and absolutely annihilates influence. Even little children feel their efforts benumbed and their courage sink to nothing under the weight of mental depression as shown them in their mother's face.

Courage is very near to faith, so near indeed, as to stand beside faith in the very foreground of the spiritual life. While cultivating courage we are increasing our spiritual bone and sinew, for all who pursue an ideal need courage, and courage is to those who seek that which is noble and high and far away, what the buoyant wave is to the swimmer, the wing to the dove, the string to the harp, the flame to the candle. It is their very life.

The mother who refuses to be discouraged, who refuses to see the narrow personal element in her child's struggles, who stimulates and encourages him to go on, is training and cultivating in him a moral strength and a fortitude that in the bigger things of life will not be downed.

To have this kind of a mother is the best thing that can happen to a child. She stands behind him in his course. Her enthusiasms and beliefs are always wide awake. While handing him generous sympathy, she gives at the same instant a subtle fortitude, born of her trust, which is strong enough to

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keep him always moving on. He is appreciated, yet at the same time governed. He is understood, yet kept about his business by constant supervision and control.

One word about the mother's voice. It may seem a little thing, but I believe that the mother's voice may be made a great influence or a great hindrance in her work.

A young mother once said to me that she longed to radiate spirituality and peace from her person, and to make home a place of rest for her husband and her children. Have this ideal, but be sure that the words which fall from your lips are not thwarting your effort even as they fall!

A loud, opinionated, dictatorial, irritating voice will thwart the efforts of the best mother that ever lived. A gentle voice will invest with dignity her simplest word.

It is little wonder to me that in many homes the children grow up silent and morose. They are afraid, morally afraid, of the bitter, penetrating "personal" manner of their mother's smallest word, making a request an attack, an opinion an instant invitation to battle.

An arrogant, critical, self-assertive, combative manner of speaking in the mother hardens and divides. On the other hand, gentle courtesy, respect

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for the opinion of others, true humility, and a soft, appealing voice radiate influence of a kind which is never forgotten.

A mother can not afford to raise her voice. Her authority must be seated in the brain, not in the voice. To scold, to nag, to assert herself and her opinion, this the mother can not afford to do. It is said of Florence Nightingale that during the two years of her nerve-racking life in the Crimea she was never heard to raise her voice, never once seen to lose, however pressed, the gentle dignity which made the men who saw her turn to kiss her shadow as it fell upon their pillows.

This is an ideal worthy of imitation! Think of the homes that would profit if their domestic campaigns could be carried out under the leadership of such personal discipline and sweetness!

## II

### THE MOTHER'S DUTY TO HERSELF

"God did anoint thee with His odorous oil  
To wrestle, not to reign—and he assigns  
All thy tears over, like pure crystallines  
To younger fellow-workers of the soil  
To wear for amulets. So others shall  
Take patience, labor, to their hearts and hand  
From thy hand, and thy heart, and thy brave cheer,  
And God's grace fructify through thee to all."

—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

In the first flush of enthusiasm for her new life, particularly if she is intelligent and unselfish, the young mother often sacrifices herself in ways that eventually prove unwise. Her special talents are given up, her individuality lost, even her old friends are turned away. "I have no time. I must be at home," is her invariable reply to any invitation she may get. Very soon people stop asking her to join them and she sinks into the background of life, submerged in the details of housekeeping, sacrificed hopelessly and forever upon the altar of home.

When there are several children, and the duties and cares of life really begin to press upon her, another change takes place. The woman, with her priceless gift of self, becomes extinguished in the

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housemother; the personality of the wife is first blurred and then forever lost by the demands of her new vocation. This sacrifice, which many young mothers so willingly make, is unnecessary. What is more, it is unwise, it is a very poor and short-sighted policy.

The woman who marries young is ignorant of all the most vital and important phases of life. To stop thinking, stop reading, stop having an active interest in things outside her home, then, is fatal.

The very time of all times for a woman to progress spiritually and mentally is *after* she is married. To stagnate, fall back, refuse to cultivate herself then, is, as I have said, the most short-sighted of policies; for, like the man in the parable, she will find if she does not add daily to her store of inner treasures, Time, the inexorable, will eventually take away from her even that which she has.

Yet it is hard not to become narrow. As a woman's efforts and interests center more and more closely around the home, she finds herself gradually monopolized by it. She cuts off first one outside interest and then another. She always tells herself that it is "only while the children are young," or "just now while I am so busy." Life seems very long and she thinks she will have time "later on" to rake together the paling ashes and rekindle the powers and enthusiasm of her youth.

## **THE MOTHER'S DUTY TO HERSELF**

But unfortunately, when the time does come, and she grasps the coveted leisure, something is found wanting within herself. It is too late. When the children are young, is just the very time that she herself is ripe to receive impressions that count. Her nature is tender, plastic, amenable, full of sympathies. As her cares diminish, so also diminish within her the powers of mind and body which constitute her being.

The statement that man's usefulness ends at forty, though discouraging, is true in one respect: neither man nor woman, except in rare instances, finds it possible after forty to begin anything new. Fashioning of the raw materials of life and character-construction must be done in youth. Youth is the time of beginnings. Youth is the season in which effort is best rewarded. After forty it is hard indeed to add anything to the basic principles of one's being—it is almost impossible. Only in the blush and warmth of youth, just edging upon the sweet fulfilment of maturity, are planted the seeds that will secure a middle-age worth living.

A mother does indeed owe a duty to herself, the most important phase of which is to protect herself from the hardening, narrowing existence of a domestic life with no outlets. Unless she does so protect herself she may suddenly wake up to find her

## SELF-TRAINING FOR MOTHERS

horizon bounded only by the chromatics of domesticity, and herself unable to amount to anything vital in the lives of those for whom she has unwisely made the improvident, unappreciated sacrifices of Self.

Here are a few words from a letter recently addressed to one of the editors of the *Outlook*: "I thought, when I got married at twenty, that it was the proper thing to have a family, and, as we had very little of this world's goods also thought it the thing to do all the necessary work for them. I have had nine children, did all my own work, including washing, ironing, housecleaning, and the care of the little ones as they came along, which was about every two years; also sewed everything they wore, including trousers for the boys and caps and jackets for the girls while little. I also helped them all in their school work, and started them in music, etc. But as they grew older, I got behind the times. I never belonged to a club or a society or lodge, nor went to any one's house scarcely; there wasn't time. In consequence, I knew nothing that was going on in the town, much less the events of the country, and at the same time my husband kept growing in wisdom and knowledge, from mixing with men and hearing topics of the times discussed. At the beginning of our married life I had just as quick a mind to grasp things as he had, and had more school education,

## THE MOTHER'S DUTY TO HERSELF

having graduated from a three years' high school. My husband more and more declined to discuss things with me; as he said, 'I didn't know anything about it.' When I'd ask, he'd say, 'Oh, you wouldn't understand if I'd tell you.' So here I am at forty-five years, hopelessly dull and uninteresting, while he can mix with the highest minds in the country as an equal. . . . I've been out of touch with people too long now, and my husband would much rather go and talk to some woman who hasn't had any children, because she knows things (I am not specifying any particular woman). I simply bore him to death because I'm not interesting. Now, tell me, how was it my fault? I was only doing what I thought was my duty. No woman can keep up with things who never talks with any one but young children. As soon as my children grew up they took the same attitude as their father, and frequently say, 'Oh, mother doesn't know.' They look up to and admire their father, because he's a man of the world and knows how to act when he goes out. How can I urge my daughters now to go and raise large families? It means by the time you have lost your figure and charm for them they are all ashamed of you. . . ."

This mother, and thousands like her, fail to see the difference between unselfishness and self-abnegation.

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tion. True motherhood is essentially unselfish, but the perfect mother is not self-abnegating. She can not afford to make a total sacrifice. Instead she realizes that she must gather all the forces of life within herself, and nurture them patiently for years, if she is to maintain her position of guide and friend and companion to the boys and girls as well as to the husband for whose welfare she spends out her health and youth.

For the very reason that many of her physical attractions—her bloom, her figure, her grace—must go, is it the more imperative that her mind be kept alert, her position in the community maintained, her work and influence outside the home continued.

A mother can not afford to be self-abnegating. She who puts a high value upon her own time and effort, will find that her family unconsciously follow her example. The efforts of the drudge, though it makes my blood boil to admit it, are soon taken for granted, and very little made of them.

It is only being provident of the future for a mother to give time and thought to her own development. And believe me if she does not do this herself no one will do it for her.

Presently, when her children grow up they will demand intelligent comradeship; if she is illiterate

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she can not give it. Later on they will want advice, guidance, general direction as to what they should do or say or write in certain business or social perplexities; if the mother has been hopelessly out of the world for twenty years how can she give it? There is much more to do for children than to mend their clothes and order the events of their daily life. To inspire them, guide them, stimulate them to effort, comfort them in defeat, applaud their success, direct their energies—this demands power, and power is generated in each human soul by experience, by thought and by living generously and broadly. Such power flows directly from a mother's soul into her children's lives—it is personality. She can not give this out unless she has it.

To really be anything at middle-age, a woman must have systematically given time and thought to her own development for years. This means that she must have led an earnest life, for from a spend-thrift youth will spring no harvest.

Many older women look and are uninteresting, because they have lost the grace of personality. The sweetness of youth has vanished, and in it they have neglected to plant the kind of seed that bears fruit in middle-age. Middle-age is the test of life. The bright threads gathered into the hands of youth are patternless for all their beauty. In middle-age they

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take a definite form and there begin to be results. Although it is far from the harvest time, the fields are full of promise; much is visible, and the soul begins to count its gain and know its loss. To prepare for an interesting middle-age is one of the best investments of time a woman can make.

Does it still sound selfish—this thought of a duty to herself when life is all complex with the varying demands of others, and each day hard to pilot to a safe harbor, laden as it is with duties not one little bit concerning Self, yet of her own choosing?

We are not selfish if we occasionally look inward. Around the magnet of the mother many different lives and natures cling. She has a great responsibility. Unless grace accrues to her with the daily living of her life, all will suffer. Her efforts for the material welfare of her home will be ineffective and colorless unless she herself gathers strength from a spiritual and mental world outside its bounds.

One of a happy mother's greatest temptations is to become absorbed in her home and her children, satisfied with herself, as gratified and substantiated in them. Yet the very moment that she puts herself, as it were, all in them, she ceases to grow. And this is not spiritual thrift.

Every grain of Self, prized and stimulated and

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guarded, is just that much more beauty to add to the mysteries of inner and personal life. Spiritual thrift, or in other words, the proper care of Self, is not time wasted, but time gained, for without the resources of personality, without the mysterious quality of inward personal strength in their parents, children run riot and are uninfluenced.

Just so long as a woman keeps a straight path open from her soul out into the world beyond, she will keep the grace and magnetism of personality. To do this she must have some leisure to read, think, and work a little, daily, in her "upland farm." Thoreau tells of the imperishable blooms to be found there: "Your higher ground, your upland farm, whither no cart path leads, but where you mount alone with your hoe—where the life everlasting grows; there you raise a crop which needs not to be brought down into the valley to a market; which you barter for heavenly products.

The special growth of this upland farm is personality. The mother who would keep the enthusiasm of youth and add to it the vigor and strength of maturity must fly there often. Personality—the gift of youth must be redeemed in middle-age. To many minds, summer's crown of wheat is more interesting than the frail tints of spring. In maturity woman presents in her face, her poise, and her

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general output, all the indistinct outlines of her maidenhood, intensified and fulfilled. She has redeemed herself. She is what she once hoped she might become.

No phase of life is so fraught with opportunity for woman than the domestic. If she is without a home, husband, and children, she rightly feels that she has been denied the very scent and glory of her being. But it is a sphere in which to find—not to lose—herself. A woman is a better mother and a better wife who refuses to lose herself and her personality in the material interests of her family. By insisting that her own development shall not be thwarted and submerged she rises to her proper dominion over the home, and fulfils her duty to herself. Life is always the better for a little spice.

The woman who has the independence to refuse to be a drudge and the ability to guard and advance her own personality, will find that she is given a reverence and a far-abounding love undreamed of by many a patient Griselda renowned for sacrifice, who may have died, even, in harness under the lash of a whimsical and capricious family. There is no life better fitted for the right development of woman than home life, and the duties and joys of domesticity, provided she has the character and judgment to live it without losing her own soul.

### III

#### MAKING TIME

"The common problem, yours, mine, every one's,  
Is not to fancy what were fair in life  
Provided it could be—but finding first  
What may be, then find how to make it fair  
Up to our means, a very different thing."

—ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING.

"How can we make time for self-culture? Life is already full, too full; not another thing can be crowded in." Many women feel this, many women say it; but is it quite true?

Examine your life critically as if you were somebody else. I think it is safe to say that you will find, if you are quite honest with yourself, a host of absolutely non-essential, peace-destroying, time-filling lines of effort, sapping your very life-blood, yet giving you nothing in return.

Well, what then? Be brave! Up, and have done with them forever! Spend yourself, if you will, freely, liberally; but spend yourself where you will get a return. Because all the sheep in a neighboring pasture jump through a hole in the hedge is no reason for you to follow until you know what is on the other side. Look for a return—it is only spiritual thrift.

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For instance, before you spend hours making your children's clothes by your own hand, wearing out body and mind with fine stitching, see if the same garments can not be bought at the same price, thus saving time. Before you use up your health washing, baking, sweeping, see if there is not some electric device, cheap and practical, that will buy you ease and a few precious hours. Before you undertake a business venture be sure that the profit will equal the strength and energy you are promising to put into it. If you give several hours a week to cards, question if the return in pleasure is equal to the sacrifice of time. If you are planting a garden, plant for definite results, not aimlessly because you happen to "like" this or that flower. When choosing a book or a play, choose something that will give you mental food or good honest laughter, do not be satisfied with "just anything." Is it not fair to say that life is overfull because so much time is wasted?

Talent for organization and an executive mind are more valuable to the mother of to-day than many accomplishments. The "busy" people are always those who waste time and who really *do* the least. To be "busy" is to lack method and coöordinated effort, for the people who do the most, the really "big" people, have time. It is well to ask if being "busy" really pays.

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With a little searching some unfruitful occupations will be found in every life, some efforts which are being spent improvidently, without spiritual return. Reorganize, train the head to save the hands, reconstruct detail, employ saved time. Employment in self-culture of wasted time is all that any woman needs.

What are the time-wasting non-essentials? Roughly speaking, they are all work, religious, political, social, or domestic, done to so great an extent that the essentials of life are imperilled.

What to the wife and mother are essentials? Good humor, poise, health, time—particularly time for companionship with her husband. These are the very tools of her trade.

If you find yourselves "busy" ask before it is too late, "What shall I give up?" Probably a glance will be sufficient to show you why you are too "rushed" to give the best kind of love to your children, why you are always cross at the end of the day, why you are losing the precious mental and physical qualities of youth.

In many homes there is everything but repose. Yet, unless the mother is calm and reassuring, unless she "has time" for her children, she will find it hard to make a success of herself or of them. A "busy" mother, a mother continually "on the go," lacks

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concentration of effort, and without it she simply can not hold her children.

And the secret of it all is so simple—just knowing what to give up and then having the will and courage to do it.

In the mother's work it is more important to conserve energy than to spend it; vastly more necessary to control nerve force than to exhibit it; it is what the mother has within herself that determines her success, not any kind of display. It is in the quiet of her own soul that new powers must be generated. To give out energy, nerve force, physical strength, mental effort in one great tumble until there is nothing left but exhaustion and tears is a too common mistake.

To have any leisure it is necessary for a mother to ask very early in her career, "What shall I give up?" And the answer to this question tips the scales of happiness one way or the other for all time. An intelligent facing of this question with a determination to eliminate all effort that does not contribute something to the main and eternal channels of her being, is the surest way to happiness.

The proper use of time is at the root of power. To use time profitably and have a little left over is the secret of a well-ordered life. It is so easy to forget this, or fail to realize it, and to plunge into about

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**t**wice as much work as can possibly be carried to a finish.

Yet nothing makes a woman happier and more cheerful than to possess the faculty of organizing her home so as to use all her assets to their best advantage. This may be reached only by elimination, by a continual giving up of unnecessary effort.

What shall be done with the saved time? Use it in getting out of the rut. Lay off the yoke. Just an hour, it may be, every day, or even less; but use it to exercise mind and body and spirit. The way, the means, just how she shall do this, no one woman can decide for another.

There may be a few sad instances where to a broken and harassed mother this ideal, simple as it is, is quite impossible. She can not give up anything, because she *has* nothing. Some lives may be so cruelly tied, so barren, so difficult, that there can be no thought of effort other than the necessary one of keeping body and soul together with the material elements of daily bread.

But the miles of well-built attractive streets in every city, and again the miles of pretty houses outside the city limits, attest that the average woman is not a drudge, that, though she may be curtailed in some ways, may have to work and manage and contrive, she yet has freedom, and she can, if she will,

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find time to build within herself the eternal and celestial habitation of her soul.

I was surprised the other day to meet a busy young matron hurrying out of a large institute of learning. She had books under her arm, and left at the door a crowd of youthful journalists and school-teachers. She hastened to explain why she was there. After several years of wrestling almost exclusively with problems of domestic nature, she found that she could no longer concentrate her mind upon anything outside of the narrow boundaries of her home. "I was not going to let my mind go to seed," she said, her eyes flashing defiance as she scented disapproval. "It is only two hours every week—surely I have a right to that much time—and I am taking up the hardest kind of studies in English, writing and memorizing—just to keep what I had before I was married."

Wise, wise mother! Laying up for herself, not selfish stores of selfish knowledge, but fitting herself to "keep her job"; fitting herself to keep that job of being a mother, that simple job seldom taken by woman as an earnest, stirring work; trifled with by her, toyed with, and then too often angrily given up or called a "failure."

But, you may ask, is not woman's first duty to the man she marries, and the children she brings into

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the world, regardless of every other consideration? Most certainly, and all else is truly secondary; but standing so close to that first duty as to almost seem an equal one, is the voice of her inner self, demanding fulfilment of the promises and possibilities of youth.

A busy woman who wishes to accomplish things other than material must see her ideal hanging like the golden fruit of the fairy books, night and day, before her eyes. To reach it she will find she has to make many personal sacrifices. By forethought and management of detail a little time can be saved in every day. This time, even if it is but a few moments at night, or early in the morning before the many voices of the home begin to cry their claims upon her, is hers, her opportunity. It is the one door open from her soul into the past and present of the world beyond, and, as she stands daily at its threshold she breathes the breath of a different life, and draws into her being stimulus and courage for another day of cares.

Let me add to these thoughts with a letter, found in a recent number of the *Spectator*—a letter which should be an inspiration to every woman who reads it. Here is the story of how one mother glorified “The Common Task” and became spiritually great through the doing of small things. But let her speak for herself:

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*"Sir.*—It was with the keenest interest I read your review on ‘The Common Task.’ You complain that ‘there is only one account in the whole book of the day of an ordinary hard-working married woman.’ Well, for your own benefit and satisfaction here’s another which you can pass on if you like. I think if ‘a week,’ instead of ‘a day’ of my life, had been required, the book would have been even of greater and more varied interest, for I think it can more truly be said that, in household matters ‘one week telleth another.’ Every day brings its different duties in addition to those which, like dusting, are done daily. And it is this variety which just saves us poor Jills-of-all-trades from becoming mere machines. If only all people could have variety of work, they would not need even to be amused. It is difficult to say which of mine would be the most interesting day, all are so full; but we will take Monday, being the first of the week. We are six all told, including the maid. We used to be seven; but the first bird has left the nest and flown across the sea. However, his letters are frequent and cheery, and writing to him one of the many pleasant duties of the week. I rise at 7:30; it used to be six, but that was many years ago, and now I let my young daughter help to wash the household flannels, while I turn out all the beds and collect the sheets and

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other things for laundering. Breakfast must be at 8:15 to enable the two boys, who attend a private school, to get away at 8:40. Then prayers, and the work of the day begins. I go straight to my washtub, and the maid to hers (as soon as the washing-up is done), and we peg away until 11:15, when my part is done, and sunshine and fresh breezes do the rest. I can not understand why washing day is so disliked. What can be more delightful than to see the black-edged, grimy collars, shirts and towels becoming cleaner and whiter every minute? And then the smell of everything when they come in from the garden! Violets can hardly beat it! The daughter meantime has done the dusting, turned the airing sheets, kept up fires, and done the flowers. Then we make the beds and I see to the greenhouse, water and turn around the ninety pots and seed boxes, and, thanks to that assiduous pest, greenfly, sometimes have to put a dozen plants out in the yard and give them a good squirting with some of the lovely soapy water. By this time it is one o'clock, and the boys are home from school, so I simply fly up the stairs and exchange my gown of cotton for one more suitable to my afternoon circumstances. Family dinner (cold with hot tart) at 1:15. There is no fixed rule for Monday afternoons. Sometimes I have to go into town to do some shopping; sometimes gardening,

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for we have a very large garden; but the aching state of my nether limbs makes me prefer retirement to my workroom, where I can tackle the piles of needlework waiting to be done, or, if the spirit moves, write, which is one of my greatest pleasures as a restful hobby. A friend may or may not drop in to afternoon tea. If not, family tea takes place at 5:30. After that family prayer, family reading, and family singing of rounds and part-songs, for I have taught all my little brood to sing, and am still teaching them to play. Then they do their home lessons while I either read, write or sew again until 7:45, when off I go with my daughter to rehearsal, for we both are in a musical society, and that, though hard work in a way, is my greatest mental and physical refreshment. Home again by 9:45 to a frugal supper of cocoa and home-made bread, a little more reading, a little gossip, a look around the house, call in the cat, lock up, put out the lights, and go to bed to sleep like a top till the sun creeps in and reminds us that another day is born, and the 'common task' has to be taken up again. It is not all so easy as it looks on paper, but it is a woman's duty and easier to do than to leave undone. A woman in such circumstances does not merely 'go,' she is impelled along by the sense that certain duties are waiting to be done, and hers are the hands to do them. Worries and vexa-

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tions I have, of course, but they are not of my own making, as personally I take the greatest delight in everything I do, and I believe that if every girl were put earlier ‘on her own’ in the matter of housewifery, the ‘Blue Bird’ would be in evidence far oftener than it is. Hoping I have not taxed the patience of a ‘mere man’ by this homely recital, I am, Sir, &c.

S. H. E. L.”

“CARDIFF.”

“[What are we to say of the writer of this admirable letter? There is a story which tells how a man praised the Duke of Wellington to his face in good round terms, and the Duke replied, ‘Don’t be a damned fool, sir.’ Save that ‘S. H. E. L.’ would tell us what she thought of us in terms less vehement but none the less plain, we should like to tell her what we think of her. As it is, all we will say is, ‘Hats off, gentlemen.’ This, after all, is the finest thing in the world. And yet to talk of it even as shamefacedly as we have done is something like an outrage. ‘Oh, fortunate mother. Therefore your home and garden shall endure. Therefore, for you the stock-dove shall croon his hoarse note and the bees make their light humming round your flowers.’—ED. SPECTATOR.]”

## IV

### HEALTH.

“A sound Mind in a sound Body is a short but full description of a happy state in this world.”

—LOCKE.

“Oh health! health! the blessing of the rich! the riches of the poor! who can buy thee at too dear a rate since there is no enjoying the world without thee?”

—BEN JONSON.

PERHAPS it may seem prosaic to bring the moral attributes of cheerfulness and serenity down from their height to the level of comfortable clothes and shoes that fit! But I believe that many so-called “cross” women are cross only because they lack the necessary sense of proportion to see that the spirit must have a comfortable habitation if it is to grow, or to realize the importance of securing it this practical assistance. I verily believe that the road to Heaven is longer and stonier to ill-shod feet and strained eyes than it is to the woman who takes precaution to fit out her body before she begins to climb!

“Cheerfulness is the principle ingredient in the

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composition of health," says Murphy; or, to put it in another way, only the utmost force of character can produce cheerfulness under the handicap of ill-health. Health is to woman the dynamo which generates her spiritual power. Before that little blurring sound is heard in the engine is the time for self-examination. Before nerves are on edge and temper out of sorts is the time to ask if the machinery which runs the higher life is in repair.

Doctors, fortunately for women, appreciate what a handicap "nerves" are, and if a sense of tension and strain is felt it is not hard to secure the services of one who will be not only skilful, but sympathetic. To do as he suggests will be the first step toward acquiring working efficiency and the blessing of poise.

Poise is the happy balance struck in a life where mind and body work together, where spiritual and nervous energies are equally developed, and where the intellectual and physical output of the body are ruled by health. Poise is something more than health—it is plus-health.

Emerson coined the word "plus-health" to describe a condition of body and mind, in which, over and above the health necessary that one may be able to do one's daily work, there is yet another supply, a plus-health, as he called it, to be drawn upon in emergencies; a bank, as it were, into which the provi-

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dent woman drops a coin of rest and mental relaxation every day, for the possible drain on her vitality that a future day may hold.

To live in such a condition is to live buoyed up by hope and courage. Hope and courage, both direct results of health, are the first angels to desert the House of Life once it has been deprived of its fuel. The fuel of life, its inward fire and true illumination, is health.

Woman can not afford to disregard the importance of keeping well stocked with fuel her House of Life, nor can she for one moment afford to overlook this matter of garnering for herself, while filled with the vitality and initiative of youth, a precious store of "plus-health."

Woman must not live for the present, for we depend upon her for all the future. Through her hands, as mother of the human race, the thread of its destiny runs, dyed by her fingers even as it passes, in a deep and immortal spiritual dye. The color, the strength, the lightness, the durability—all are hers to give.

Though man may be allowed to spend his energies on the present and even be praised for so doing, in the mind and body of woman sleeps the future of the human family, and it is she who, while training the

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child to become a grown man, fulfils a task of unspeakable spiritual dignity and social importance.

To fit herself for this her true and special work she must have health. Be the cause never so good, to allow it to use up every available bit of nervous energy, to sap drop by drop the vitality of her being, to live, so pressed down by care that only a weary sediment of self is left at the end of the day, and she is incapable of giving out refreshment to those who depend upon her for it, is wrong.

Yet this does not mean that she may be idle. Work is essential to happiness. To have work to do and to do it well is one of the surest paths to health. As Carlyle says: "Work is the grand cure of all the maladies and miseries that ever beset mankind." It is a joy to be useful to those we love; we must contribute in some way to the happiness of others if we ourselves are to be happy. Nothing can be worse for a woman than to live aimlessly, nothing better than for her to have a sense of vocation, to be working for definite ends, and to feel that her hand and her mind have a daily task to do which she and no one else in the whole wide world can fully accomplish.

Every woman, whether she is a wife or not, must have something to do. A work into which she can throw her interests. By work, by service, she keeps

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alive in herself the precious elasticity and adaptability which find themselves mysteriously contraverted into what Emerson has called "plus-health."

"Thank God every morning when you get up that you have something to do which must be done whether you like it or not," says Charles Kingsley. "Being forced to work and forced to do your best will breed in you temperance, self-control, diligence, strength of will, content, and a hundred virtues which the idle will never know."

Work and interests outside the home help us to fight against one of the greatest of health-consumers—worry. I do not suppose a person has ever lived who has been free of worry. Yet we must fight worry, and we must fight it through the body. Ill-health and the peculiar depression which surrounds it is a fertile breeding-ground for anxious thoughts.

Worry is pathologic. Spiritual depression and complaining are signs of disease. Health—or better still, plus-health—has its own resilience and is courageous. The Soul, braced by bodily fortitude, invites conflict, and repeats the stirring spiritual command, "I am, I can, I ought, I will." It faces difficulty with trust. The mind in a fagged and exhausted body can reach no such vantage ground.

Recreation and pleasure are necessary to health,

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yet how few of us plan our lives, what we shall do and what we shall not do, with this in mind.

The farmer soon learns that to sow the same seeds in the same place every year exhausts the soil, and that eventually only poor little crops will appear where he had hoped for great results. Why can we not apply this principle to our own lives? Why do we fail to see, even though year after year patient, toiling Nature endeavors to teach us the lesson by example?

There is a mental starvation just as surely as there is a physical one, and many a wife and mother has tasted it. The body and the mind need recreation. The need is not a selfish one, but the expression of a psychological principle. With pleasure and relaxation come an added ability to give. Deny the soul the stimulant that it gains from outside sources, and immediately there is a change, a narrowing, less to give out, and little by little a sure using up of the natural plus-health of youth and enthusiasm.

What constitutes relaxation for the tired mother? Not sewing or fancy work which requires the closest kind of attention and often a cramped position of the body, but instead a brisk walk with a congenial friend, a concert or an amusing play, reading a bright novel while lying comfortably in a hammock or upon her sofa. Anything, in fact, which lifts the

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mind entirely out of the rut which it must run in every day—anything which widens the horizon and gives new food for thought; also, smile as one may, there is a physiological necessity for laughter! Relaxation is necessary to development, in order that the refreshed brain may bring back new energy to its old tasks. Every hour invested in natural, happy pleasure and amusement will add to the plus-health of mind and body.

Mothers and fathers need a holiday quite as much as any other class of hard-worked persons. Often this need is overlooked or put aside until the tired parents wake up to find that they have been too long in harness to be able to enjoy themselves, and, sad to say, find also that with the ability to enjoy has gone out of their lives a great part of their influence over their children.

I do not mean to say that parents in moderate circumstances can often let their burdens slip away and go off for a honeymoon just together; but I do say most emphatically that in most lives it can be done occasionally and that doing it carefully and prudently hurts nobody; instead, saves the very principle in the young parents that goes for the best bringing up of their children in later years.

A trip together after ten years of the narrowest and most faithful kind of domesticity is like a rain-

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storm to a thirsty flower or a spadeful of woody earth thrown upon parched and stony soil. Instantly there is fresh courage, enthusiasm, mental and physical health, almost, I might say, renewed youth.

I believe in it, even if much of the little pile of savings has to go, and even if moralizing relatives lift their eyebrows and prophesy evil. I believe in it because drudgery, and what we sometimes describe as "the rut" kill that priceless thing in individuals—personal power—and personal power is the one force in life which can accomplish things, anything, from commercial success down to making the baby mind.

No life is so narrow as a good mother's. Every day she walks around the same well-trodden path. So gradually does the path change and mount that even the pleasure of realizing that she is advancing is denied her. Almost nothing new and stirring and vital comes into her life. How can she be expected to have any ideas or to be really helpful to her growing children? So, in order to save herself and also that she may have more to give in the future, she gets out into the world once in a while, and for a few weeks out of perhaps every eight or ten years, is purely selfish. And, contradictory as this may seem, those who profit most directly from her selfishness are her children.

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It has often been said that the majority of persons found in asylums are those unfortunate men and women who have been denied stimulating and vital occupations in life. It is the woman who has nothing to look at, nothing to think of, nothing to do who goes insane; why? Because there is no life-giving channel out from her soul to the world beyond; she has nothing with which to fill her time but thoughts of self. Egotism soon leads to melancholia.

We can not afford to dwell too much on ourselves. Self-pity must be avoided as the plague; it is the curse of women, and active work for others is its only antidote. The mind is sure to become unbalanced if it is focussed inward. When, instead, the energies are directed outward, when we work lovingly and happily for other people, body and mind are put on the defensive against disease, and we begin to really live.

We used to give little thought to overwork and fatigue, but now we must look at them both in a new light. Experiments have been made which prove that fatigue is a much more serious thing than mere bodily discomfort—that in extreme fatigue a dangerous poison is generated in the system, which is even capable of causing death. It is a fluid which so lowers the

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tone of the body that there is a general depression which seems almost to invite disease.

There are two other dangers to be considered with fatigue and overwork—immediate threatening of the supply of plus-health; for upon it the exhausted body must at once draw, and soon the precious bank of safety is empty; and also the craving for stimulant which is the sure result of brain and body fag. “I must sleep” is soon followed by a sedative of one kind or another, harmless, perhaps, if taken once or twice, but fatal if it becomes habitual. Then in the daytime, when work looms up which must be done at any cost, there is the cry for more, something, anything to prick on the exhausted faculties. Plus-health is a safeguard against the temptation which is sure to assail the weary, the inevitable temptation to take sedatives.

Some of nature’s signals of overwork are irritability, sleeplessness, sense of exhaustion and lack of initiative. After a while these symptoms are followed by loss of color, lack of appetite, and inability to concentrate the mind. Worry, often the first result of exhaustion, is also a sign of mental fatigue, and with it comes a strange inability to bear even the usual cares of the day. It pays to recognize the signs of overwork at once, for by reconstructing one’s

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life while there is yet time the catastrophe of a total wreck of health may be averted.

An interesting woman, who has accomplished much in a long and useful life, once told me that to get the most out of every twenty-four hours, and to do one's best work, the day must be divided into three periods of eight hours each. Eight hours for sleep, eight hours for work, and eight hours for refreshment of one kind or another, bathing, dressing, eating, and relaxation outside the home.

Less sleep, more work, and no relaxation result in a fatal product: the insensate drudge no woman is called upon to be in this enlightened age. More pleasure, more sleep, and no work, and we have also a fatal product: woman incapable, through selfishness and idleness, of contributing anything vital to the generation that is to follow her and for whose progress she is responsible. It seems, for our best development, that we need the three, divided equally—sleep, work, and relaxation—that so divided they produce the atmosphere of balance, of well-adjusted power and energy that woman needs in which to do her best work.

Wholesome food, early hours, a comfortable, nerve-relaxing, protected life is the best for the mother. Any form of living that trespasses upon her health must be foregone, for as soon as health begins

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to fail, good humor quickly follows—how quickly we do not like to ask. A few nervous headaches, a week or so of indigestion and backache, and where is the rosy, comfortable little mother? Gone, quite gone. And what is more she will never come back unless she is willing to fight one of the hardest battles we know of—that of endeavoring to regain the perfect health lost by abuse. Without health, without good humor, the mother's path is hard indeed to tread. If she will but realize it in time!

Now in order to *get*, the mother who *gives* must be wise enough to maintain a certain privacy of mind, to reserve a little time each day, and to give herself stimulating relaxation once in a while; not selfishly, but that she may have a better quality of love to give as time goes on. She must provide the oil if the lamp she holds is to light the world. A wise thing at the beginning of every day is for the busy mother to say, "Which shall be my hour of rest to-day?"

The keeping of this hour—this personal hour—is not selfish; quite the reverse, for by keeping it she is enabled to give more. Without systematically conserving strength this can not be done. Sooner or later there will be a nervous breakdown, then courage and good humor are lost, perhaps forever.

There is far too little concern shown for the

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average mother. Indeed there would be better children and happier homes if mothers insisted more often upon their independence (if they can get it in no other way), upon a little time for quiet thought each day, and upon a certain amount of fun. Mothers need fun, and too often they get absolutely none of it from one year's end to the other.

But how can we get the time? you say. System, system; it is the only way. If men ran their business as many women run the home, would not utter chaos result? System is the greatest time-conserver known. Men realize this, and everything in the business-house is systematized to the smallest detail. Can not we mothers do the same? A written list of the day's duties is the greatest help, and has saved me more hours than I can estimate for personal work. System and electricity are two of woman's greatest time-savers; by use of them she can accomplish wonders!

There may be mothers whose cares assume such proportions that the thought of rest is out of the question, though I very much doubt if by rearrangement and reorganization it will not be found possible to secure a quiet hour. Though "Drudgery is the gray angel of success," we must not allow ourselves to forget the shining features of success, our ultimate end, even while wearing the gray garments; and no



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course of living that dooms one to the gray garments forever can be just.

If you feel that your life is a failure and that you have not done all that you might with your opportunities remember that "we learn wisdom from failure much more than from success; often discover what will do from what will not do, and probably he who never made a mistake never made a discovery. The blue of heaven is larger than the cloud," and the gray garments only hide for a short time the royal crimson of success.

# V

## NURSERY DAYS—SPIRITUAL

“We mothers are sowing seed. It is a seed so precious that even if much is blown in the wind and falls on what seem to our dim eyes but rocky places, yet if but one seed germinates we can glorify God.”

—ANNIE WINSOR ALLEN.

EVERY one who plants a garden and who loves and studies flowers knows that before her ardent dreams of flaunting white and scarlet petals can come true, she must give days of anxious consideration to the question of the soil; that the plain uninteresting brown soil, rightly understood, is the medium which brings her hopes most quickly to their realization.

The garden, in its symbolic waiting, seems in my eyes to be a perfect picture of the little child. What shall be strewn upon its eager, quickening surface? The most venturesome parent must ask this question with at least some little trembling and self-distrust. Of one thing we are sure, there can be no flowers of strength, of beauty, of character, unless the soil is first prepared, and, following the same law, what the child becomes, is dependent upon the

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nursery days, upon the strength or weakness of his beginning.

And does this miracle of giving and receiving actually take place in the nursery? Do the strong graces of the soul sift through the mother's hand down into the child's dark, empty little heart, simply, uneventfully, with no blowing of celestial trumpets? Even so it is; in quite an humble way is the child's heart prepared by example, by love, and by a thousand little daily lessons, until the seed which is to be immortal begins to show that it is firmly rooted, and the child definitely takes his place in God's garden as one of His own.

It is only when we get to be middle-aged that we appreciate what the planting of the seed of character is. When it is possible for us to look back with the perspective of distance, we realize that that which we have hitherto vaguely called "instinctive" knowledge of right and wrong, "instinctive" beliefs, "instinctive" ideals, are nothing more or less than the fast rooting in our own natures of the simple early seed.

"High principles" (a somewhat vague name which we use for a kind of collection of spiritual qualities), is nothing more or less than an invisible gauge, an inner standard, gained by every child through imitation, and by which he learns to guide

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his daily life. High principle and the "instinctive" qualities are the result of the seed planted in our half-awakened, primitive little beings by our parents' hands.

One of the strange things about it all is that we who have charge of little children can not help planting the seed. Even if we say, "I will not prejudice my baby, he must grow up to be himself," nevertheless the very effort made not to influence has its effect, and by the mere daily interchange of little words spoken about little things, howsoever guarded from extremes, we *do* influence, and in the end we *do* plant the seed.

Now, admitting that by the mere act of living the seed is planted whether we will or no, is not it best to choose the seed, to plant it at the right time, to weed when weeding is necessary, to direct the growing plants, using the same forethought that we use in lesser things?

If we wish to have poppies or pansies or daisies in our garden we do not sit down and say, "I wish I had poppies and pansies and daisies in my garden." Instead we go busily about procuring the best seed; we then plant with the greatest care, and, watching day by day, use every modern device to bring them in safety to their full awakening.

So it is with the children. If we want their

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little faces to shine with the sweet candor of the pansy, if we wish to find in them the gentle daisy-like grace of simplicity and the scarlet poppies of moral force, we must not sit down and say, "I wish my child to be true and sweet and strong," but rather we must get up and work and think and plant the seed—there is no other way.

He who loves the soil knows that the time to plant is early. Nothing is more fatal to success than to wait. We can begin almost when the garden is still in its long white robes of infancy, by protecting the seedlings until they are able to be set out. With character it is the same. The time to begin is when the child first stretches out his hand with volition—not after he is spoiled—and this, you know, is very, very soon.

In the garden we also choose the time. We do not try to plant when the earth lies angry in the noonday heat, or dry for want of rain, but rather in the evening when the dew is freshly fallen and everything at peace. Then it is that we dig the warm, moist little furrow and drop in the seeds. Once they are tucked up, we wait in faith.

It is the same in the garden of character. There is no use in trying to plant the seeds of any new idea in the heart of a child who is bent upon furthering some different thought, or at a time when he is tired

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or hungry or hurt. These occasions, too often chosen by mothers for their little lectures, are worse than unpropitious—they are fatal.

Half of our success in this battle for results lies in the wisdom we have of choosing when to plant the seed.

A few gentle serious words at bed-time, or when for one reason or another there seems to be a sudden nearing of the child to us—these with the parents' own actions and example are the furrow and the seed.

Of course we all have some failures and many disappointments, but I believe that there are certain fundamental traits of character, which, if shown to a child every day that he lives, through the medium of example, are gained by him almost without effort, and without a possibility of failure.

The old idea of inherited evil is breaking down before the more sane and hopeful one of overcoming evil by environment; and as in disease, we can often overcome and defeat it by simple precaution, so we can watch in the little garden-plot of character, forefend the child at the start, arm him for his particular place in the battle of life, and plant good seed before he knows that he has come to the fight innocently handicapped.

We must not forget that it is upon the ideals set up in his heart in the nursery—not in school or

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in business—that the child begins to sound his particular variation upon the family theme. These early ideals become the invisible foundation of his character, and according to their strength and permanence does his life-structure eventually rise or fall.

Later, if the seed has become rooted within him, below the frills and trimmings of his particular individuality, lie the solid planks of worth, the so-called “instinctive” qualities, fastened forever in his deep and secret self. Thus planted they outlive Time itself, for they share with him the immortality of his soul.

Sofia in the “Old Wives’ Tale” illustrates this thought when she defies Gerald Scales’s proposition to go to Paris together on the eve of their marriage. Young, inexperienced, foolishly in love as she is, she has the invisible but certain standard of high principle back in her mind and she can not defy it. This “fragile slip of the Baines stock unconsciously drawing upon the accumulated strength of generations of honest living had put a defeat upon him.” One whit less of honesty from the parents and grandparents and Sofia must surely have fallen.

What are a few of the essential seeds, without which the garden is a poor and flimsy thing? There are some which it is hard to do without, among them are the seeds of loyalty, of unselfishness, of cheerfulness, and of curiosity.

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Loyalty in friendship, loyalty in home-life, loyalty in school, these seeds are handed to a child through example and by a thousand daily lessons. He is trained to know truth almost at the beginning—not by being punished if he errs, but by seeing truth around him, expressed every day and hour in his parents' lives.

There is only one way to plant the seed of truth—be truthful. Never make one promise, however tiny, that is not promptly, gladly fulfilled. How can a child grow the seed of truth within him if it is not first planted, if from the beginning he is fooled, deceived, and made the unhappy victim of false promises? A child learns only too quickly to take the crooked way himself.

Loyalty and truth are basic traits, they are among the few absolutely necessary fundamental traits of character, and no trouble is too great to try to plant them. Without them there is nothing to depend upon, no solid base on which to plant and develop. They are the pins, as it were, which hold together the whole fabric of character. The child who learns "instinctively" to be loyal to his friend, true to his parents, to himself as a child, will grow up to show the same traits to his wife and in his work as a matter of course. He will be—oh blessed word—trust-worthy.

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One of the best ways of teaching the practical aspect of truth to a child is to impress upon him from babyhood that truth is a conscientious adhering to facts. Truth can not lend itself to evasion or subterfuge. Truth is not pliable. Children, though we may not believe it, are eminently practical; they will see and understand this principle readily.

Such lessons, it is needless to say, must be founded upon example or they will have no result. Words count for little when it comes to training the moral output of an intelligent child. How can a child be expected to have any regard for truth, or any real conception of truth, if the mother who expounds it to him is herself living in a net-work and tissue of evasion?

Perhaps this may sound too crude, too stern; is not some little leeway to be allowed the mother in the complexity and difficulty of her life? I believe not, in regard to fundamentals. And truth is a fundamental. After all, put it quite practically: can a child possibly comprehend truth if he sees and hears untruth in the every-day life around him, particularly if he sees it in his own mother, and hears it from her lips?

Untruthfulness may be due to either cowardice, example, or inheritance. The foundation-time is the time to look for all these possibilities. Love will

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go a long way toward counteracting natural cowardice; true love and true sympathy between a mother and her child make a lie impossible, or very nearly so. Example will also do a great deal toward counteracting inheritance. A scrupulous example of absolute adherence to facts, and absolute truth in every action —this, when held up to the child in the lives of his parents, should help him as nothing else will to be a noble and honorable man.

By the seed of unselfishness I do not mean a blind giving up, but that most difficult thing to cultivate—sense of proportion. This seed is one, which, if it can be made to grow, soon wins a place for the child forever in the great heart of the world. Particularly in America where so much is done for the child, he soon forgets that he is really not the center of the universe at all, but only a very small cog in the great wheel.

Arnold Bennett describes the attitude of the American child toward the older generation as “an astonishing, amusing, exquisite, incomprehensible mixture of effective admiration, trust, and rather casual tolerating scorn.” Is this the way our children appear to visitors beyond the sea?

The seed of unselfishness, unlike that of truth, is planted more by training than by example. With a little thought it will be found that the child can

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very readily be taught to respect the belongings of his playmates, to rise when elders enter the room, to be silent when other people are talking, to give place in his games occasionally to the wishes of others, to change the eternal "I, I, I" to a more subdued "you, they, we."

Is it not also true that we mothers sit and admire too often when our better part would be to check, to guide, to suggest an occasional pianissimo rather than the eternal enthusiastic forté of self-interest?

The child has a distinct place in the world, and the sooner he is shown how very small a place it is, the better. Unselfishness, sense of proportion, willingness to stand aside and let the other child have a turn once in a while, respect to others; these seeds are planted only by earnest effort, but they pay.

If they are not planted there are many knocks ahead, for the world does not stop to consider when it deals out the hard lessons kept for the egoist outside his home; a final effort, as it were, on nature's part to "get him into shape," and the lessons are the harder because they come upon a totally unprepared mind. But come they must to every human soul some time or another. Happy is he to whom they come in the privacy of his home and at his mother's hand.

"I" in right proportion to "you" is a lesson

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to be learned in the nursery days. It is at the very foundation of moral progress. When a child once sees his own magnitude in proportion to the magnitude of others, he will begin to be tolerant, he will begin to *really be*. While blaming the intolerant child, do not forget that it is his mother who too often closes his eyes to this revelation of proportion by her own immoderate kisses before the little god of Self.

Perhaps you will wonder what I mean by the seed of curiosity—I mean that seed which of all others is the most productive of useful activity and spiritual growth. I mean the desire to know. “One of the chief aims of education should be to stimulate the great virtue of curiosity,” and I believe that in home-education this fact is too often overlooked.

It is the very core and essence of childhood to ask, ask, ask—according to the answers received is the “virtue of curiosity” stimulated, trained, satisfied, encouraged toward noble ends; or blocked off, perverted, and made to take its course under-ground—for run it must—where it is likely to do more harm than can easily be guessed.

There will be very little vulgar curiosity shown by children whose natural curiosity is stimulated and satisfied by a wise parent’s truthful answers. By such answers the little child climbs safely toward

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some of the most beautiful experiences of life. Knowledge of books, history, people, nature, things both little and big, can be fed out to him as his growing curiosity prompts.

To want to know is the very yeast of life. Inanition, stupid acceptance of a narrow lot, lack of investigative qualities put so narrow a fence around personality that they are to be fought against from the very moment the child begins to be.

Encourage questions, be brave and meet them face to face. Stimulate curiosity, try to awaken enthusiasm and interest at every turn, and remember that the more life and vitality there is in a child the better man will he make in the end.

Faithfulness in little things and cheerfulness are also seeds that beautify life. They are well worth the pains of cultivation in the nursery days.

The child may be trained very early in his life to be faithful; if he is given a little task, to do it thoroughly, and later on, to perform his duties whatever they may be, whether at home or in school, thoroughly. Faithfulness is after all a priceless trait! It may begin only with a well-done task, but it will end in a great spiritual field of active, faithful work. Of how few people can one use the word "steadfast," yet what a pillar in the usual shifting sands of character and irresolution such a quality is!

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Begin at the very beginning of the child's life—teach him to be faithful to his daily tasks, however unimportant they may seem; faithful at school, faithful in his prayers, faithful to his promised word, his friends, his work, faithful in whatever is demanded of him; trusting that out of this humble faithfulness in what is small, will develop as a perfect bud upon a strong green stem, the spiritual and immortal faithfulness of his higher life.

Cheerfulness is somewhat temperamental, and for this reason difficult to cultivate. But at least we can and should insist that the children do not exhibit its opposite—ugly frowns and a complaining voice. Nothing is more beautiful or helpful than the innate cheerfulness which bubbles spontaneously out of a happy child's nature. If only every child might have it! But even if cheerfulness is not always spontaneous there is a possibility of imitating it, and the unselfishness of the attempt will be found of great good in itself.

Begin as soon as the child can speak and teach him not to complain. There is so much in making it a matter of habit to be cheerful, bright, and affectionate. "Like begets like," says the old adage, and a cheerful mother who sings about her work and refuses to despond when things go wrong will very soon shame a child out of his complaining. Have it

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one of the few rules of the home that there are to be no complaints. The children will thank you for it in the end.

As I write of such noble qualities as faithfulness, cheerfulness, and truth I realize as only a mother can, how difficult and often how heart-breaking the task of child-training is. We long to see our children perfect in themselves each noble gift—we are met at every turn by disappointment and difficulty. Heredity often steps in and waves a danger signal, ill-health in the child stands in front of us and arrests our efforts, or nervous exhaustion and over-work make it impossible for us to do our best. In one way or another conditions of the past or present combine to make the results we long to gain difficult and sometimes impossible.

But we must remember, in spite of all manner of discouragement that if we begin early and *are ourselves* faithful, cheerful and true we may be sure of at least a measure of success. Realize the importance of trifles, for out of trifles do we build our work. Habits the children must have—shall we allow them to make their habits good or bad? For, hard as it is to admit, the matter does lie greatly in our own hands.

Remember, then, in childhood nature is plastic—new clay, waiting to be formed. To form it nobly

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is the first great and all-important task of motherhood. Upon our success depends the power of the next generation, our hand writes to-day the history and future of the race.

But, no matter how great may be our striving in our child's behalf, he must do the essential work of character-building himself. I, his mother, can only show him the way and make his work easier by my experience, wisdom, and common sense. All that the child really gains he must gain for and by himself. This is one of the mysteries of individual life. The untold treasures of the world, and the eternal beauties of character are the rewards only of those who seek them out. They can not be bestowed. Though you may agonize in love over a faulty child, it is he who must awaken, or nothing will be gained. Children must build their own characters, and for the most part with but little assistance. You remember in the story of the Prodigal Son, how nothing could be done for him until he said of his own accord, "*I will arise.*" From that moment all things were possible.

A serious fault we often make in planning our living garden is the fault of trying to do too much. We are over-anxious for success, we crowd in too many accomplishments, we insist upon certain popular studies even at the cost of nerves and health.

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“There is but one art—to omit,” says Stevenson.  
“Oh, if I knew how to omit, I would ask no other knowledge!”

Omission, if rightly understood, would save many a child’s life. In discipline, also, omit the nagging reproach; don’t say cross words; leave threat and worn-out rebuke. Avoid conflict—by what we *don’t* say we often gain untold influence. Cross words destroy discipline, nagging words poison love. Unnatural excitement interferes with normal play; so-called accomplishments often eat up health. Just look over your little garden and see what can be omitted with results that pay.

And we must have faith in the future. We must plan for to-morrow. Every stroke of work done in the garden must be done for the future, filling a far-away ideal. The best thing we can do for the children is to fit them for to-morrow. If solid, honest strength goes in the work of every day the future will surely profit.

We must cultivate patience to wait for individual development, and faith that the seeds planted in the nursery days will germinate, however slowly; some plants take years to grow, some are a mass of bloom before they are well up. The gardener knows his plants and waits.

## VI

### NURSERY DAYS—PHYSICAL

“Ah! what would the world be to us,  
If the children were no more?  
We should dread the desert behind us  
Worse than the dark before.”

—LONGFELLOW.

“How many troubles are with children born!  
Yet he that wants them, counts himself forlorn.”

—DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.

THE soil which we take such pains to have “just right” in the garden before the seeds are sown has its counterpart in the living garden. Health is to the child what soil is to the flowers. Give the child health first, then plant the white seeds of spiritual beauty. His life will have only half the struggle and battle if he is helped to be normal, and if he can have, or perhaps I might say, if he is *allowed* to have the point of view of health.

It is very interesting to see the change that has taken place in the world’s thought about medicine. It seems almost as if we were attaining in our youth to the wisdom of the Chinese who pay their doctors by the year to keep them well, stopping the comfort-

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able little salary immediately there is an illness in the family.

After all, does not this seem a rather clever way of doing, and one which we might well imitate? The doctor who is paid only when his people are well, is going to spend a good deal of his intelligence in keeping them so.

In the working out of such an idea as this lies the beginning of what we now call preventive medicine. It is to this new science that we are looking to-day, believing that it will solve many of our problems and make life for us and for our children easier than it has ever been before.

The other day a capable young mother opened the door of a cabinet which had been provided for the nursery by a thoughtful grandmother, and showed a line of empty shelves. The bottom one only was filled. On it stood a few throat atomizers, a tiny box of pills, a bottle of castor-oil, and a few different kinds of antiseptic tablets for the preparation of lotions and gargles.

"These," she said, "are all I have used in bringing my children through the little aches and pains of childhood. I would not give them medicine for the world."

Indeed, are we getting further and further away from the old-time medicine-chest with its heavy

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cough syrups, its fever drops, its indigestible tonics, its unwholesome "lozengers."

The principle upon which we work if we believe in preventive medicine is this: instead of drugging the child after he is ill, we so watch and guard every department of his bodily health that he does not become ill. Let me give a few practical examples of what I mean.

We know that almost every disease reaches a child through his throat or nose. The cry of preventive medicine is: look down the child's throat every day, see that it never becomes inflamed and thus is made a breeding spot for disease. Spray it several times a week to kill all lurking germs, and at the first suspicion of serious trouble involving throat, nose, or digestion, put the child to bed and call in the physician, so that if possible the danger may be averted and perhaps carried off entirely by some simple external application or little course of calomel. A preventive day in bed has often been known to act as a miraculous cure to a child "stuffed up" and threatened with a heavy cold.

Then there is the digestion. Preventive medicine has here a great work to do. It teaches us so to study the question of diet, and to comprehend with such accuracy the delicate construction of the child's digestive tract that there will not be a question of

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medicine, for he will never need it! The whole subject of his digestion will be controlled by what he is given or not given to eat, and by this simple natural method he will be prevented from becoming ill. An upset stomach in a child can almost always be traced to an indiscreet or ignorant mother, or worse still to one who thinks it "doesn't matter."

A regular dose of castor-oil, given once every two or three weeks for the first five years of a child's life, as a matter of course, will so cleanse the intestines from any poisonous matter that may be collecting in them, that a "stomach attack" is a thing practically unknown—providing of course that the diet, too, is studied. And is not this really far easier than to have a cross, fretful, ailing child? After all, there is no need for any mother who is willing to exert herself and accept her responsibilities to have such a child, for it is natural that childhood should be a healthy, happy time, and under the proper conditions of care and love and understanding, such it is.

Preventive medicine marks a great line of difference in our whole attitude toward children. We who believe in it now take them to an oculist for an examination before they are sent to school; we no longer wait until with failing vision and swollen eyelids the child is suffering and behind his class and the visit imperative.

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We also take them twice every year to a dentist; we no longer wait until toothache and decay drive us there, for we realize that the correction of malformation in the mouth, and the straightening of teeth when necessary are direct means of assuring mental as well as physical health.

We have enlarged adenoids removed; we do not wait until the children become victimized by chronic cold, sleeplessness, sore throat, and depression.

We are only beginning to realize how great an effect physical things have upon mental. A so-called backward child may only be one who does not see, does not hear, or is not properly employed at home, and a "bad" child is quite as often only a poor little "misunderstood."

The boy who can not keep up with his class or who can not concentrate his mind to study is often just a case of pure physical inability to do the work, not enough red blood in his body or brain to back up the necessary mental effort. Nervous children are many times made so by over-stimulating and under-feeding.

We realize to-day as never before that our salvation does not lie in the medicine chest, but in removing from the child all obstacles to his growth. If we do this he will expand as nature meant that he should, and there will be no need for drugs.

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The normal child's gradual unfolding and development is a most thrilling study. It is more often ignorance than nature that throws sand in the machinery of his little life and is responsible for its breaking down.

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” How old this saying is! Yet we are only just beginning to wake up to its revelation in child-training!

Usually the great blessing of health is quite in the mother's hands to give, though I admit that there are some exceptions to this rule. A diet and daily programme written out by a careful physician and followed without deviation will usually keep the children well.

Bringing little children to the table and giving them food which has been selected and prepared for older people is sure to end disastrously. Give them a little system in the nursery days—certain hours to sleep, certain others for air and exercise, a bed-time, regular meal hours! Let them be ignorant of what takes place in the world after sunset, contentedly bounded by their uneventful little routine. It is the nerves we must watch. They are the weak point of resistance in many children, for the twentieth century child is born with a predisposition to suffer from them.

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I heard of a delightful child of ten, the other day, who asked her father if he was not afraid of getting lost in the streets at night when he went to town after dark! The father, I am told, gave her a very tight hug and said that the moon and the stars shone just as brightly in town as they did in the country, and that it was not hard to get home when she and mother were there waiting for him. It is needless to add that this happy child was asleep before the lights of the Great White Way were lit, and her ignorance of the midnight city world meant health.

Probably nothing is harder on a child's nerves than to be "shown off." Why bother his anxious little mind with rhymes and jingles or tricks? We American parents idolize our children, and, basking in the light of their accomplishments, we forget that for the sake of our own momentary gratification, we run a great risk for the child.

In older nations the child's place is in the peaceful background shadows of the home, and not upon its stage.

"Manner" is one of the least attractive characteristics to find in a little child. Anything that develops manner is sure to bring along with it a nervous strain. We do not always realize the tension a child is on in public or while being "shown off."

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But feel the hot hand, see the unnaturally brilliant eyes—the color flooding his face, particularly if he “makes a mistake,” and you will understand how keyed up and on edge his nature is!

Competitive sports, theatricals, parties, and dancing-class may be innocent enough, but sometimes they are made too elaborate and develop self-importance, desire to win, vanity, love of clothes, pride, and a false and precocious atmosphere of “society.”

The after-effects of a “party” or dancing-class may often be acute indigestion or a sudden “cold.” Indigestion, because the nerves of the stomach have been so tired and disturbed by excitement that it refuses to digest its food, and “cold,” taken during the reaction which always follows nervous tension. In the sudden lowering of vitality after excitement children are particularly susceptible to the influenza germ, or “grippe,” as we call it. Many germs, indeed, are found in stirred-up dust.

It is lovely to find self-control and gentle dignity in a little child. The subtle drawing away, the sweet flushing of the cheek, the shy yet enthralled poise as of a bird eager for the crumb of knowledge, but ready to fly off at the first rough word—these natural graces are born only in the healthful silence of a protected youth—they are never seen in the pert, know-

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ing, up-to-date child of parents who think only of the gratifications of to-day.

Ask yourself, honestly, which is the more attractive; is there anything less lovely than to find a little man or woman of the world where we had looked to see a blushing, shrinking child? Does it not pay to shield the child and bring him up in a sweet, natural unconsciousness? Does it not pay far better in the long run than to drag him out from his proper sphere and thrust him upon the world, quite unready as he is for the glare of its applause?

The less strain children have put upon their imaginations during the nursery days the better, for, equal in importance to laying the foundations for physical health, comes the need for control and supervision of the nerves.

Diseased nerves not only in time undermine the physical condition, but destroy moral balance, and as such are dangerous enemies to the child's spiritual development. Health of the nervous system is probably the best foundation for to-morrow that a mother can give her child. With his nerves in a healthy, glowing, normal state, his body will not be hard to reach, and with both perfect the child should present few problems, and, blessing above all blessings, he is prepared to meet his moral and intellectual struggles without handicap.

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A gentle touch is all he will need, for, with the poise and balance of perfect nervous health, comes quite naturally the wish to do his best. He is in the condition to be easily influenced for right, because the normal in him seeks the light and quite as naturally avoids the shadow.

“Wait till he is a little older!” This is the great temptation of the nursery days. Yet every difficulty of temperament and disposition met and overcome in the nursery is a victory gained for all time. It is by acting *now*—not waiting—that the way is made easy for the child of whims and fancies soon to appear where once the helpless baby lay. It is hard to do anything but love in the nursery days. It is hard also to realize that whether the child is “accomplished” or not makes very little difference, but that upon his health hangs all his future.

The child’s physical balance, as we have seen, depends upon his diet, the regularity of his life, early hours, and particularly upon all lack of nerve tension. Simplicity is the key-note to health in childhood. The more animal an existence a child leads the better he will be in the end. The less he knows before ten, the more he is likely to know after ten. Forcing in childhood is the very worst thing that we can do for him.

A good guide in the nursery days is the question:

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What really counts for the child in the future, what shall we accent that he in his maturity may profit, what ignore? It is good to get into the habit of thinking of to-day in relation to to-morrow, of thinking of the future, influenced and dedicated through to-day. Such thought is to make provision in faith for the time ahead, for the future years in which shall be determined the child's worth to his generation.

What are the things that really count? I place them thus: A healthy body, a good education, carefully-chosen friends, wholesome food, spiritual training through daily example, and the steady development of a healthy, courageous self-dependence.

To secure these advantages the parents will need quick judgment. They must be personally stimulating and brave enough to say "no" to many of the glittering, tempting things of to-day, things which have no future but ashes and disappointment.

Unhealthy amusements, over-excitement, ready-made foods, being waited on, companionship with boys and girls whose parents you do not or can not know, trying for accomplishments that are above the station of life to which the children are born, living in "rooms" or moving often, or, in fact, anything that denies children the influence of a permanent home atmosphere: these are all things to avoid. They count against the future.

## NURSERY DAYS—PHYSICAL

Such seeds (to use again the garden thought) crowd out the flowers and destroy the strength and permanence of valuable hereditary plants. What is more, they take the space, valuable space, from the flowers one wants to see; and they take the strength of the soil, so that if a little space is cleared, and a new bright seed put in, it can not grow. Strength and space, which represent will and time, have been used up and it is too late.

But for the mother whose children are still in the nursery, there are no such words as too late. She has the fresh garden, the fresh unused soil; space, sun, air, rain—she has everything. Youth and endurance stand at her right hand. Faith is her standard, belief and courage her watchwords; with these she can not fail.

Yet with the best intentions in the world the flowers run riot without a gardener. They are as demanding as children. They burst into bloom when they are cared for, they fade and pine in neglect.

The qualities to look for in a gardener are love of his work, real knowledge and a daily faithfulness in carrying out his ideals. He must have a plan underlying every effort but he must also have faith—faith in the future of his flowers, seeing in his imagination their possible glory in their present weakness.

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We mothers are all gardeners. We can not do better than apply each principle of outdoor lore to the perfecting of our children's spiritual flowers. There is hardly a thing done in the garden for the advancement of its beauty that has not a parallel right here in our daily work at home.

So much depends upon the gardener. The happy little faces in the garden reflect his every mood. His character, tastes, devotion, knowledge, all show directly in his work. So it is in the nursery. Dreadful as it is to realize, our children are usually perfect little mirrors of ourselves. It is years before they make their individualities stand apart, and the blocks that they use for their work come from a familiar spot—we have seen each stone before. However high and strange the pyramid they construct, its foundation stones are cut from out the parent's quarry—and it can be no other way.

A really good gardener must love his work. No amount of book-learning will ever take the place of love. It is quite as true that the most successful mothers are those who really love the work, who are fairly saturated in it, who take the mother's duties in the spirit of vocation, and give ungrudgingly of their very best, not because they must, but because they love.

## VII

### DISCIPLINE

"You know also that the beginning is the chiefest part of any work, especially in a young and tender thing; for that is the time at which the character is formed and most readily receives the desired impression."

—PLATO.

PROBABLY the most all-around valuable lesson of life a child can learn is obedience. Obedience helps him from the very moment he begins to be. It trains him to accept adversity and leads him to win love, it modifies his over-confidence and is the surest means of success, for the boy who obeys grows into the man who commands, and to obey well is at the very heart of spiritual progress.

Strange to say, children can not be happy unless they live in obedience to their parents, and the same principle continues to work out during all their lives. As men and women if they live in a state of disobedience to any generally-accepted moral law, they are in some way or other made outcasts. Every human being, in order that he may develop, must obey.

We make a mistake if we think of discipline as only "making children mind." There is the letter of discipline, but there is also the spirit.

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Discipline, in spirit, is the “regulating of social conduct,” having really nothing at all to do with the letter of exacting obedience, or of the coercion of one person by another.

Discipline, properly understood, is an effort on the part of those responsible for the child to so regulate his instinctive desires that by his own efforts he gradually fits himself to become an efficient human being.

Once we lose the true end of our effort, and set the work we are trying to do on a personal basis of “you must do as *I* say because *I* say so,” the big spiritual results which are so possible shrink down to the narrow human limit of the letter, and we fail because we have lost sight of our ideal.

For the child does not sin against us, his parents, but against himself, and we must teach him this from the beginning. It is the foundation upon which all our work of discipline and correction must be built.

Our solicitude is not that we ourselves may escape the small annoyances of his faults, but that he may do the best he can to build his own character and make himself of worth to his generation.

The sooner we shift the responsibility of making something of himself upon the child, the sooner will we see results. What we try to do is to show him that we are here not to scold or criticise or to exact

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the letter of the law, but to help him by our greater experience; we therefore do not bear a grudge against him when he does wrong, for he has hurt himself, not us; instead we grieve that he has gone a step backward in his task of character-building, and we try by every means in our power to help and stimulate him to go on again with surer feet in the right direction. We do this best through love and sympathy and an understanding heart.

Even realizing this, there is nothing harder than to regulate the instinctive desires of a lawless, wide-eyed, petulant little child and to impress upon him the necessity of obedience, even though it is for his own good and for his own development. Yet so to impress him is the first step in character-building. It is the first permanent cross-beam laid in the child's life, and upon it every other beam in some way depends for beauty and support.

Remember that the scolding mother is never really obeyed. It is never she who inculcates true obedience. Many evasions and circuitous routes are permitted in the nursery days, and it is better to lead than to drive.

To get the best results there must be few battles. Analyze the home life of a family of children who do not obey—are they not found to be living in a thick mist of broken threats and futile scoldings,

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with never a dignified command, never a serious calm retribution?

On the other hand, if you are so fortunate as to have a friend who has been successful in gaining her children's prompt obedience, you will soon realize that they are directed and led, usually without their even knowing it. There probably are no "don'ts" in that home, and the few rules necessary for the peace of all are dignified by being made inviolable.

Because the children are never scolded, but corrected only when absolutely necessary, they obey instantly. They obey probably very often because of the unusualness and seriousness of the reproof.

To nag and to over-emphasize little faults is not discipline. Whenever compatible with true dignity, ignore. Avoid an issue. Not in order to escape the trouble of correction or to "let the child off," but in order that when a sober-minded and careful rebuke is necessary, it may carry greater weight.

It is helpful to realize how full of changes the temperamental life of the child is. Faults, eccentricities, phases, oddities of manner that we are nearly frantic over one year change from time to time and are outgrown. Anything that is not a fundamental error of character is better ignored.

"To-day's troubles look large," someone has said, "but a week hence they will be forgotten and

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buried out of sight. If you should keep a book and daily put down the things that worry you, and see what becomes of them, it would be a benefit to you. The art of forgetting is a blessed art, but the art of overlooking is quite as important."

Think twice before giving a command, but the command once given, do not persuade or argue. The result is disrespect to say the least.

The fewer direct commands a mother gives the better, for coöperation should be the ideal in view, not autocracy. A simple request if it is for the good of all concerned and given in a kindly way is usually sufficient, and the child who is well will respond by willing and cheerful obedience.

Discipline may often be pleasantly disguised and loses nothing thereby. Keep clearly before you the thought that what you really want is to help the child to make something of himself, not simply to "make him mind."

I heard a mother say the other day that she always met rebellion in her children with, "Oh, my dear, you must be ill or you would never answer mother this way. Come right up to the nursery and I will give you a dose of castor-oil." And, indeed, so much of what we call "naughtiness" is the result of purely physical causes, that it would seem wise to make a rule of avoiding punishment and even

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hard words until a search has been made for a possible physical cause.

It is the usual thing for children to be cross, disobedient, and rebellious when they are overtired. To ask any particular favor of a child who is nervously unstrung and struggling to keep up at the end of a long day is to bring certain disaster. A little digestive upset, the coming on of a cold, over-excitement, any of these things may be at the bottom of a fit of temper or a flagrant act of disobedience.

In Japan they dose naughty children, and the wise little country in this as in many other ways is worthy of imitation.

Much also is gained if the mother can control herself, weary and exasperated though she may be, so that she does not reprove or command when she is angry. Respect must be felt for the person who exerts authority, or that authority counts for very little. To discipline in a fit of temper is a woful mistake.

A sense of humor is the mother's greatest ally. It is often better than a hundred preachments. Words that are repeated over and over again soon become cant. To preach to children takes away their own sharp edge of realization—they get so accustomed to their mother's "you must always do so and so, my dear," that their own susceptibilities become

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dulled and in the end they no longer respond to her suggestions.

An ounce of practice and a good laugh are worth many pounds of preaching. Trust to the child's imitative powers and be what you wish him to become. Words count for little to children, only touching the very outer rim of their existence. Actions, on the other hand, set up definite ideals for them to follow, and are the surest, quickest means of moulding character.

Do not be too critical. Continual criticism either discourages a child hopelessly and dampens all his enthusiasm to really make something of himself, or else causes him to resent what he deems to be an injustice and, finally, is an incentive to a state of continual rebellion.

This does not mean that one is to adopt a policy of persistently ignoring faults, far from it; but I think we all know what a nagging, critical spirit is in other people, how hard it is to bear, and how different it is from an earnest effort on their part to counteract a weakness, or the true desire to really understand in us and overcome a fault.

Try never to bear a grudge against a child. I have seen children absolutely martyred by being put "in disgrace." Because a child is naughty or disobedient or commits one serious fault is it necessary

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to visit continual displeasure upon him, to make him walk in outer darkness and to act as if his fault had shut him entirely outside your love?

A speedy settling up of matters is always best between mother and child, and a quick and entire forgiveness, once the fault is atoned. Besides which, bearing a grudge immediately puts the whole business of wrong-doing on a personal basis, and that is just what we are trying to avoid.

At a children's picnic the other day, one of the young mothers called after her little brood a continual stream of "don'ts." I saw that an elderly Quakeress of great charm who was of the party could endure no longer in silence. Calling the anxious mother over to her side, she said gently, "My dear, when I was thy age, I had seven children, and I remember one day my mother said to me, 'Try saying *do* instead of *don't*.' It was the turning point in my life, my dear, and whatever success thee may think I have had is due to the following out of that simple rule. Try it for thyself."

To offer a child an ideal by saying "do" is spiritually of a greater advantage to him than to discourage and rebuke him by continually saying "don't." In other words, instead of framing one's wish thus: "don't stoop," "don't speak so quickly," "don't pick those flowers," a better result is gained

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by saying, "hold yourself straighter," "try to speak more distinctly," "pick these flowers over here instead."

It is also well to remember that the very characteristics in a child which worry the mother most and give her the greatest trouble are those which she should respect, for they are in all probability the awkward manifestations of undisciplined power, the first ungoverned stirrings of that which will eventually be her child's highest self. Dormant strength is always vagrant, uncontrolled, and difficult to understand, but without it, the child would be worth little.

There are many things to realize before we scold or punish. The difficulties we meet in our children are often the result of too much or too little of the mysterious quality known as vitality. They either have too much, and, unemployed, it bubbles over and is translated into mischief; or, having too little, they are lazy, obstinate, fretful, protesting by their very faults that the cause of failure has not been understood.

Discipline, here, is quite useless. One may scold and punish forever and gain nothing. The over-energized child if given plenty of pleasant, wholesome work, physical and manual, soon runs out the superabundance of his energy and is no longer "bad."

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The pathetic child who is scolded because he is dull, and who is punished because he seems obstinate and perverse, has probably not enough red blood in his veins to enable him to stand up for himself and make a good showing in his little world. What he needs is not discipline, but a mode of living lowered to a less complicated scale—a simple daily routine well within his comprehension, and sympathetic affection from his companions.

Vitality in the child, if guided by discipline, will prove one of the very strongest of all his forces for good. Desire and vitality are the child's primitive spiritual possessions, it is for us who are over him to help him so to couple them with judgment that they become his servants, not he theirs. To gain this control he must be willing to submit to the discipline of regulated instincts and definite ideals.

Have you ever heard a mother say something like this, "Now I do wish you would try to be like your little cousin. *She* never cries, and she lets her mother brush her hair without a word, and she is so sweet and pretty. Do try to be like her, she is a much better little girl than you are," and have you ever thought of the results of such a comparison? I can hardly fancy anything more depressing to a sensitive child than always to have held up before

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her imagination the supposed or actual merits of another child.

Yet almost unconsciously many mothers do this as a means of discipline, and whenever they wish to teach a lesson or make a suggestion they do so by the mistaken means of comparison. Instead of disciplining, comparison absolutely paralyzes the efforts of the child who is thus compared to his or her own disadvantage, and sooner or later results in a jealous rage and hatred toward the little cousin or sister or friend who is always held up as being more favored, more docile, and more attractive.

Comparison is almost always harmful. Every child needs individual study and individual encouragement. It only hinders him in the putting out of his own powers to speak of the greater powers of another.

Also there is no stimulant to a child greater than the knowledge that he is believed in by his mother. He will do wonders under her smile of approbation; to have her approve of him and believe in him ahead of all other children in the world is to give him the best impetus we know of for effectual effort. Like his love's favor in the days of old, the child who wears his mother's belief as the knight his lady's sleeve or veil is the child who is most likely to win out in the fight. There can be no greater handicap to him

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than the discouragement and chill which comes when his mother holds up some other child to his disadvantage.

There is another form of discipline, a higher discipline, the yoke of mankind, borne since the beginning, the great teacher of the race. To try to avoid it for our children is to produce moral flabbiness where they most need strength. This yoke is pain. Disappointment and pain are the usual instruments of higher discipline, and as life is full of both the wise mother trains her children even in the nursery days to accept and bear them.

A trained nurse told me not long ago of a young mother and father in a great western city who deceived their only son on his way to have his tonsils removed, by telling him he was going to the seashore. When they arrived at the hospital the child was carried screaming into the operating room and instantly etherized. When the operation was over he could only be induced to take nourishment by having a candy popped into his mouth after each painful swallow. Two motors filled with toys had followed him the day before and he was allowed to break them up at will, while his governess and frightened parents sat weeping by the bed.

Children must not be alarmed about illness. Ignorant servants are often allowed to unfold stories

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of hospital experiences they have heard of or undergone, and the children become terrified even at the suggestion of a visit from the doctor!

Above all, never let any one say, "If you don't mind, I will send for the doctor, and he'll give you some bad medicine!" A remark of this kind is disastrous, and months of patient teaching will be required to undo its influence.

Our aim should be to fortify children from the very beginning to bear pain, to undergo what is hard, and to stand up manfully in the face of a moral or physical hurt. Thus to fortify them is to help them build character and develop will.

It has been stated recently that for every one person who fails from intellectual defect there are ten who fail from moral defect. What the world really needs after all is not more brains, it is more character.

Pierpont Morgan used to say that character, not ability, is a banker's most important asset. Character can not be developed in children unless they are taught to "be in love with difficulty."

A soft life, moral indulgence, too much easy pleasure, prepares the way for weakness. Discipline of the will, on the other hand, courage to stand before disappointment and pain without flinching, makes character.

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"Character," says Bishop Rhinelander, "is what we make out of what God gives us." God sends children into this world differently endowed, but what each child makes out of his endowment, be it great or small, by his own will, *this* is character.

Character is brought out and developed in children not by sheltering them, but by allowing them to meet the daily discipline of life, by fortifying them to greet disappointment cheerfully, sickness courageously, and any necessary deprivation of pleasure without malice.

I know of a mother who could not induce her little girl to go to the dentist without the offer of a bribe. As the child grew older the bribe became proportionately larger, until every six months a really handsome reward or present had to be held alluringly before the selfish, tyrannical little child to secure her obedience. What preparation for life was this? Was this child being strengthened to meet the dangers and difficulties of a woman's lot, taught to bear pain, to be courageous in the face of adversity, to be patient, unselfish, obedient to the higher discipline which God sends to all who walk this earth?

Many mothers have found it helpful to have a blank book near at hand in which to jot down day by day impressions and notes upon the children's progress. In such a book the story of the varying little

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lives is gradually unfolded, not tidily or particularly, but things recorded without ceremony, just as they happened. Differences in temperament, in treatment and discipline are here jotted down for further consultation and guidance.

In the front of such a book it would be well to write as a kind of keynote the thought of the great Froebel that the moment the mother's will clashes against the child's will, there is the beginning of alienation, and alienation is the root of all mischief.

Preyer, the German scientist, has said that love is the stimulus under which the young soul unfolds its powers most rapidly and naturally.

It is really love and understanding that we mothers need to pray for, and only after that for a knowledge of the right use of discipline.

Let us get forever away from the old conception of the word, and look upon discipline in its new and gentle guise, as the regulating of instinctive desires and the effort on our part, not to coerce or combat, but instead to clear away the obstacles in the child's path, that he may make something truly worthy of himself, both for this world and for the next.

## VIII

### RESPONSIBILITY

"Every man's task is his life-preserved."

—EMERSON.

I REMEMBER once as a little child being taken by my mother to visit a friend whose children were somewhat older than myself. I can see now the beautiful drawing-room and the lovely mother and feel again the gentle influence of the harmonious and artistic surroundings. During our visit the father happened to come in for a few minutes. He then said a thing I have never forgotten, though I was only about eight years old. He remarked impressively to my mother that he was happy to be able to say that he had never denied his children anything, that the servants were instructed to fulfil their every whim, and that he hoped to be able to continue to carry out his plan, so that they might be *perfectly happy always*.

Many years have passed: The oldest son of this tragically mistaken parent is a confirmed drunkard; one of the daughters at seventeen ran away with a man greatly her inferior; another child is a drug fiend; only one, in fact, has been able to overcome

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**the weak and disastrous love upon which they fed as children.**

It is hard to blame these children, for they were never taught self-control, self-discipline, or how to handle their own appetites. At the very first of life's trials they fell. Temptation found them pathetically unprepared. No moral strength had been given them; how could they be expected to stand upright?

I often think of this family when I feel discouraged and ask, "is it worth while after all?" It is worth while to struggle to win strength for the children. Weak and foolish love is the very surest way to destroy moral force and without moral force children can do nothing with their lives.

Parents want their children "to be happy always"; it is only natural. Every hurt given to her child is a double stab in the mother's own heart. But for the very reason that children may one day know true happiness, they must be "subject unto their parents," taught, through the very great love we bear them what it means to give up, and what it is to obey.

Happiness for the children, however, is not reached in so easy a way to the parents as through indulgence. To teach the human soul how to be happy, is a master work, a great and difficult art, needing patience, a subtle handling and great wisdom.

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Without order and discipline there can be no happiness. To appreciate this in the nursery days is to begin well.

Every effort to make children happy fails if we take away from them sense of responsibility. Think for a child and he is sure to be discontented. Character is formed only by meeting responsibility and assuming care. It is doing children injustice to deny them the mental development that comes from doing their own thinking and making their own decisions. Childhood is a preparation. It is the school-time of character as well as of intellect.

I know a mother who never allows a departing child to close the front door without some such questions as these: "Have you got your umbrella; did you remember that book that you want to take back to the library; have you got enough change in your purse; are you sure you have not forgotten your trunk key; or theatre ticket" (or whatever else it may have been that the child was not to forget).

Questions like these coming punctually from an older, stronger mind just when the child should be exerting his own will and striving not to forget anything that should be remembered deprives him at once of both initiative and memory.

Children develop far better when they are encour-

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aged to do their own thinking and allowed to suffer when their forethought or memory fails. They need not be forward or too independent because they think for themselves and use their own minds instead of relying always upon the suggestions made by a watchful mother. Indeed, children can be made self-reliant and helpful only by being taught from childhood to use their own powers, and to depend upon themselves.

I have heard mothers say, "Oh, it's so much easier to do it myself." No doubt, but is it fair to the child? The same type of mother will say, "I can not bear to make my boy pick up his clothes at night. He is so sleepy I do it for him"; or "The children are so hungry they can't wait to wash their hands."

It is not fair to the child to be careless about little things, for it is just these little things that bring out his thoughtfulness, self-reliance, and self-control.

Self-control, a characteristic absolutely essential to efficient manhood or womanhood, is not learned in a day. It is the result of patient teaching and training through all the long slow years of babyhood and youth.

Attractive personal habits, sense of responsibility, care of toys, clothes, books, and other possessions that children accumulate at the expense and effort of

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those who love them—these have to be taught patiently, and from the very beginning held up as necessary ideals.

To do this a little time must be spent every day in helping the child to help himself. Let him make his own decisions, plan his own little daily routine, feel responsible for his time, his toys, his room, all that he owns.

A wise mother once told me that as a matter of principle she gave each one of her children a task to perform in the home every day. It was not because they *really helped*; she often spent more time in showing them how to do what she desired than if she had done the work several times over herself. It was to develop in them an interest in the home, and a sense of responsibility and service.

A child can not hope to reach his full power as man or woman without a well-developed sense of responsibility. This quality is absolutely necessary to character. It will rarely be found in persons who, as children, were not taught to think and act for themselves and for others.

In another home I know the five boys take turns in being “policeman,” receiving every Saturday a quarter for the week’s work! The policeman must see that the cat is in, the dog tied up, the lights out, the little sister’s toys safely in from the porch, the

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house locked, the cloak room in order for the next day's boisterous exit at school-time.

Children who feel that they share the responsibility of the home with their parents develop more easily and present fewer problems. They are happier and more loving because they are working side by side with their parents instead of being put away as "too young to understand."

Children understand a great deal—a great deal more than we usually give them credit for. They enjoy responsibility and they respond instantly and earnestly when an appeal is made to their individual powers. Do not deny them the inner warmth of this feeling that they are of use. It binds them to you and gives them, through effort, a very real and enduring love of home.

Have we not all seen the child whose parents in trying to make him "perfectly happy" have removed from him all life-giving experiences? They think for him, act for him, suggest his pleasures, overwhelm him with toys, never allow anything unpleasant or distressing to be mentioned in his presence. What is the result? A cross, selfish child, without personal power or initiative, absolutely unprepared to meet the world, understanding none of its values. Having neither duties nor responsibilities, he has no deep spiritual experiences. Being of

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no use, he is unhappy. He is a failure, and why? Only because of his parents' short-sighted, selfish love.

A boy King is spared no rigors of early life. His childhood is stern, full of responsibility and effort. Each moment is accounted for, hard lessons are learned every day, physical endurance is practised, diplomacy and courtesy taught, obedience made a law. Probably no vocation has a harder, longer initiation of effort than that of learning how to rule. Records of the daily life of the world's great Kings show the austerity and difficulty of the preparation thought necessary by older nations to go into the making of a King. Beside these the life of the ultra-rich American boy is almost disgusting—shorn of everything that is hard and difficult, and that goes to the making of a man.

I have heard many fathers say, "I don't want my children to know anything about the hardships of life; they will meet them soon enough."

Though this may be all very well from the parent's point of view, is it quite fair to the child? Is it preparing him to live well? For, after all, in spite of the most loving parents' care and protection, each child has his own way to win, his own future to carve. Is it not better for him to have the

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main facts of life, as he must live it when he becomes a man, presented to him wisely and lovingly while he is yet a child? I think this is particularly applicable in regard to the question of money.

Even a very little child may be taught the value of money; that his father has to work hard to earn it, and his mother contrive wisely to make it last. He may realize this when scarcely out of the nursery without losing any of his natural cheerfulness and trust. And though some parents may disagree with me, I do not think it is ever too soon to shift a little of this particular kind of responsibility upon the children.

What is our ultimate aim in bringing them up? Is it not that they may be helped by our own mature discretion in the forming of character? We long to make them happy, but to gratify their passions does not make them happy, nor does it avail to hide from them the true state of our resources. A child would far rather feel that he is trusted by his parents and allowed to share any anxiety that may be theirs. He is happier if he knows how great a part money plays in life, and is taught to value it as the hard won product of his father's toil.

One of the best ways to impress the value of money upon the child is to give him a small allowance by law means for his use only, excepting a sum

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in how very short a way a cent will go, but he also learns which of the pleasures bought really pay, the box of candy that makes him sick, or the interesting game that affords him many hours of play; the pink ice-cream, so soon to disappear, or the little picture book that is his friend for years. Though he may not be able to put his impressions in plain words at first, he is learning valuable lessons, to be applied unconsciously to life as he grows older.

There is probably nothing which is so full of surprises to every one of us as our account book. Who has not said, "What, all this money gone *already!* What can I have done with it?" Then it is that the neat, unprejudiced row of figures stand out like sentinels before us pointing to our indiscretions!

Every boy and girl is better for having this experience in youth. A minute account of how his allowance is spent is a valuable training to the mind, developing the memory, teaching quickness in figures, accuracy, and also increasing that wholesome kind of wisdom which comes only from realizing his mistakes.

To be careless about money is more than a mistake. It is a very grave fault, for, not only is it insidious and harmful to ourselves, but sooner or later it is sure to involve the happiness and safety of others. Therefore, I think it is never too soon

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for the mother who wishes to see her children develop into honorable men and women to begin to teach them the value of money, the important place it occupies in all our lives, and the necessity of being scrupulous to a fault in rendering an account of every penny of which we are made the steward.

There is no training better for the child than the fixed allowance and the daily keeping of the small accounts. It induces punctiliousness and precision of character. It teaches one of the most important lessons of life—prompt attention to money matters. It is doing the child an injustice to fling a careless dollar at his feet whenever impulse dictates, requiring from him no account of how it has been spent, but perhaps scolding him for extravagance when it is gone.

The regular allowance, however small it may be, is a great factor in development, for it begins in childhood to train many valuable traits of character. Besides this it is a great pleasure. There is no joy like the joy of possession. Children yearn to own something. A small coin given for his “very own” is the keenest delight to a child, always provided his pleasure in it has not first been dulled by the misfortune of having too much.

He finds his greatest happiness in self-expression. He would therefore be more contented to receive a

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small allowance, and go with it in his little purse every week to choose some long-coveted toy, than to receive perhaps three times the value given by an indulgent parent, to buy a toy for which his small heart had never known the sweet pang of desire.

It is a pity to take away this pleasure from the child by giving him random and unsolicited toys.

Let him *want* a toy, "save up" for it, earn it, and then possess it, for the moral struggle which is behind such an accomplishment constitutes and is the very core of joy.

Indulgent love, the foolish love of weakness, is to the child what a sickening twilight would be to the garden, drawing out weak, flowerless stems unable to bear either the heat of the summer or the frost of winter, and holding not one vital element upon which the baby child or baby plant can draw for the nourishment it needs.

What is the ideal mother-love? I think it is, more than any other one thing, the love which does not do for the child, but which stimulates the child to do for himself. True mother-love must have wisdom to teach, humility to learn, and patience to persevere in the face of every difficulty. It must have also that boundless heavenly gift of faithfulness which Kipling so beautifully describes in these lines:

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“If I should drown in the deepest sea  
I know whose voice would come down to me  
O, Mother o’mine, O, Mother o’mine.

“If I should hang on the highest hill  
I know whose love would come up to me still  
O, Mother o’mine, O, Mother o’mine.

“If I should be damned in both body and soul  
I know whose prayers would make me whole.  
O, Mother o’mine, O, Mother o’mine.”

It is from nurseries in which love like this has shone that the world’s great men and women have gone out to fight their glorious battles in the world. Each one has been the unconscious result of what his mother accomplished for him and with him in the nursery days. He will fight by her precepts and wear her armor until his dying day.

Then one other thought. It is not only for the present we work, but for the future. Who has not wandered into an old garden and been overcome by thoughts of those who loved it in the past and who have left in it so precious a legacy of their work! So it is with character. It pays to work at seed-time, for only then can the future glory be assured. In forming a noble child the nation is uplifted and the whole racial strain improved. We work not only for ourselves and for the joys of the present moment,

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but for the future, for the unborn children of the nation, for the race, and for Heaven.

"Each one of us is only the footing up of a double column of figures," says Oliver Wendell Holmes, "that goes back to the first pair. Every unit tells, and some are plus and some are minus. We are mainly nothing but the answers to a long sum in addition and subtraction." Such words as these impress rather fearfully upon us our position as parents in the great chain of life. They must make us realize more clearly than we have ever done before the need for individual worth, that we, as mothers, may count a plus and not a minus in the great final summing up.

For it is to us as women, as mothers, that the gracious task of handing on the precious lamp of life is given, it is we who forge the new links in the unending chain. Will our child be a plus or a minus in the great eventual life sum? This is the question. We think of it as we forge the new link and hammer it and place it forever where it is to be for judgment and use in the world. The forging which we do in the nursery must be done to one cry, "to-morrow,"—for it is out in the world, not here in safety at our side, that the worth of our little one shall be proven.

The best thing we can do for our children is

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to fit them for to-morrow ; the only *real* thing we can do for them is to so build to-day that they will be able to meet their lives with high moral and physical endurance. We can not foresee what may come to them, but if solid, honest strength goes into the building of to-day, the future must profit. If we build earnestly and thoughtfully from the beginning, though our work may be surrounded by sands, the sand will take the shape of our foundations and through everything shifting and mistaken there will stand firm the solid strength of a right beginning.

## IX

### SCHOOL DAYS

“In one school or another, including the great school of human experience, every one of us is a pupil all his days. And, indeed, to learn and be trained seems to be the purpose of our whole experiment with life. I can not think of any other adequate reason for our being here.”

“What is education for? To teach us how to live; to develop our powers; to teach us to think; to teach us to find our place in the world, to find out what to do and how to do it. Any process that accomplishes these things is education.”

—E. S. MARTIN.

“ONE of the most serious reasons for giving children tasks and urging them to difficult undertakings is that they may surely learn what longing is. The desire for what is high and far away—this is the heart of life. The desire to attain, the courage to strive, the wisdom to desire and dare well—these are what we want for our children.”

In these words, Annie Winsor Allen defines the true goal of education. Too often we think of school as a place of classes, marks, prizes, examinations, standing, whereas in reality such things have little to do with education. They may even obstruct the path of the child’s effort toward true discovery and advance.

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The aim of education is reached when there has been created within the soul of the child for all time the divine hunger for what is "high and far away," coupled with such development of mind and imagination as will enable him to reach out and, little by little, by his own effort, satisfy his desire.

Happy is the child who is able to get behind the scenes of which he reads, and by means of sympathy, imagination, and his inherent dramatic instincts re-live the experiences of those who have gone before and who have made history and the intellectual world. For him education has done its true work.

Education is a drawing out. Let us substitute reach for teach. If a child's mind is a portmanteau, as some one has said, to educate is not to pack but to unpack it.

It is not our business to crowd into the child a heterogeneous mass of unrelated, undigested facts; it is rather to nourish and draw out, to remove obstacles, to help him to perfect and develop himself.

We can begin to do this very soon in his life, as a kind of preparation. But education, or rather the sending of the child to school, should not take place before he is seven.

Yet how is it that in olden times the child of five read her Bible and did wonderful samplers of the finest needlework?

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Why this change, some one may ask, and have we improved upon our grandmothers after all?

Indeed, we have not improved upon the charming and cultivated women of a generation or two ago, but the conditions under which we live have changed, and they demand less strain for the children and a longer physical preparation before definite brain-work is taken up. The tension and effort of life to-day make it imperative to save the child from being caught in the whirlpool of nervous endeavor before he is physically developed.

To-day if the child is to be efficient, he must have health. First give him health and nervous vitality, then at seven or eight or even nine turn him over to the school-master. It will not take many months for his ravenous little brain to absorb all that other children know who have been in harness for perhaps several years.

The danger of beginning to educate children too soon is that harm may be done to the brain in its undeveloped state. Neither may the child have developed the nervous apparatus which is necessary if he is to study. Force him ever so little in this stage and he is sure to suffer.

One can easily see the result—excitability, no physical balance, and every temperamental difficulty

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accented and intensified. And this because his normal growth has been interfered with.

In a recent book on education the following table is given:\*

School	Period	Duration	Age of Class
Nursery .....	Infancy .....	3 years ..	0, 1, 2
Kindergarten ..	Babyhood .....	4 years ..	3, 4, 5, 6
Primary.....	Preadolescence ..	7 years ..	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
Secondary.....	Adolescence .....	4 years ..	14, 15, 16, 17
College .....	Immaturity .....	4 years ..	18, 19, 20, 21

For mothers who have time to give to their children, and who have the assistance of a nurse, the two first periods of education may with great advantage be merged in one.

Where home provides the proper environment, kindergarten is unnecessary. It is often, indeed, unadvisable, for there is a possibility of over-strain, and a great likelihood of harm being done to the eyes. Up to seven years the eyes are in rather a critical stage of their development, and sewing on cards, where the holes are small, or playing at any game which demands quick, correct eyesight may be seriously harmful.

To show just how hard it is to get any real hold of children in the kindergarten period of their development let me tell of a little girl of four, who re-

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\* Home, School and Vacation; Annie Winsor Allen.

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cently learned to form the letter "A" on her first day at a little private school. When she went back to school the next day she got out her slate and began to write "A"—but the teacher explained that "A" was only the beginning and that she must now go on with "B"—the child burst into tears. She could not bear the thought of beginning again. It was a week before the teacher could bring the nervous little one to contemplate "B" without a shudder!

For children who are highly-strung and excitable it is not wise to even give them "A" to study, and this little incident, which actually happened only a few weeks ago, caused me to realize as never before how unready the child of four or five is for teaching, even the kindest and most sympathetic.

Should the child, then, run wild until he is seven? By no means! His energies may be directed by means of intelligent play. He may be taught how to cut out with blunt scissors, how to paste, paint, draw with crayons, and he may be read to—these train his thought and stimulate his imagination without his knowing it.

For many parents any choice in the matter of school is quite out of the question. When the time comes for the average child to be educated he must go where other children of the neighborhood go, and he must get what he can by means directly at his

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hand. Interference with the curriculum there provided is impossible.

But in families where the school, or, better still, the teacher, can be chosen, let the mother try for results that will enrich her child's future, not for the smaller results of the moment, results symbolized by marks, rewards, and class "standing."

The school spirit that counts is the spirit which prompts a child to run home saying, "Mother, we learned the most interesting thing to-day, did you know—," and so forth, telling of enthusiasm awakened along some broad and vital line.

The school spirit which says, "I did better than all the others, I got the best mark," is not the spirit which brings big results, and the school behind such a spirit is not doing its best work.

A modern educator voices the same thought. "Teaching is to be judged not by method, but by the condition of mind that it produces in the pupil. If it produces wholesome eagerness, independence, accuracy, and intellectual modesty, it is good teaching. If it produces apathy or nervousness, mental attitudinizing and affectation, thoughtless repetition, servility of any sort, carelessness or bumptiousness, it is bad teaching." The only real test of the school is the pupil, and the only sure way for the mother to

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know what the school she has chosen is really like, is to watch her child.

I wonder if we realize how greatly the mother's attitude toward school can influence!

A mother once habitually excused her little son from school for days at a time because she fancied the teacher had shown favoritism and had been unfair. Did she foresee the effect such a course would have upon his character? Probably not. His insubordination increased, once his fancied ills were emphasized by his mother's sympathy, and he soon became so distasteful to the other scholars, and so impossible to control, that it was found necessary to remove him from the school. A succession of tutors "completed" his education.

He now shows as a grown man the same petulant, intolerant, and suspicious characteristics that marked him as a school-boy. All his weak traits were permanently emphasized by his mother's false attitude during his early childhood. Unconsciously, probably with the best intentions in the world, this mother had become a destructive force in her boy's development.

This is only one of many examples showing how much the mother's attitude has to do with the child's success at school. Many things come to boys and girls during the impressionable years of their school life—many more things than lessons learned from books.

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Children are continually changing, developing, receiving new impressions. These impressions reach the mother only after they have filtered through each child's own undeveloped intelligence, and in return, in his mother's face he reads condemnation or praise. She has it in her power to become his greatest teacher. Her manner of receiving his confidences, her judgment of his friends, her support of his school—these count more than can be expressed, and the mother's attitude toward all the little complexities of school life influences her child's progress most definitely.

It is natural for children as well as "grown-ups" to have periods of depression. Every child is sure to feel at some time that he is "worked to death," "too tired to open another book," "sick of everything," "unappreciated," "disliked." It is at this point that the weak mother allows her sympathies to be preyed upon. Instead of infusing new courage she submits her mind also to depression, and robs her child by her very expressions of tenderness of what little strength he has left.

There is a danger in too much expressed sympathy. Before commiserating and speaking thoughtless words, try reviving the child's spirit by sending him out of doors for a long play, or on some pleasant errand. After a good meal and a brisk walk he is

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very likely to return of his own accord to his books, and the whole matter blows over and is forgotten.

But if the depression lasts, and the lessons seem insurmountable, there is a reason, and the mother must find it out. The child may be graded too high, he may be ill, he may be handicapped by poor vision or nervous apprehension. It is easy to investigate the daily record of her child, for such investigation is welcomed in every school. The teacher must be found and interviewed, not critically, but with kindness, and without ill-feeling.

I have often heard teachers complain that so little interest is taken at home in school matters and that so very small a proportion of children receive any encouragement whatsoever from home or parents in their school work.

For this reason, if for no other, it is an advantage to the child if the mother will take the trouble to keep in touch with his school life, and particularly if she will come to know his teacher. A visit to her once in a while, a little friendly talk, a word or two of advice concerning the child's peculiarities of disposition—these may work wonders for him by establishing a personal relationship between himself and his teacher, and by emphasizing and stimulating in her any previous interest she may have felt.

By several yearly conversations with the teacher,

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the mother will soon get a clear view of her child's mental and moral deficiencies. It is probably fear of this very thing that keeps many mothers away from the school where instinct tells them their child is not doing his best.

It is easier to blame the teacher for unfairness and favoritism than it is to fight with the child against his peculiarities. Yet who is to defend him from his faults if not his mother?

Nor must we forget that it is absolutely necessary for the child's teacher to have some support if anything real is to be accomplished. The mother must be the teacher's ally, for rebellion and insurrection are sure to follow if she takes sides with the younger power against authority. However strongly the mother may feel at times against the teacher, in her heart of hearts, she must never allow the child to know. She must support the teacher before the child at all costs. As a matter of form and discipline this attitude is absolutely necessary. Allegiance of the two powers—home and school—must be achieved if the child is to be a success.

Children constantly come home with complaints. The parents condole and sympathize, little dreaming that they are encouraging open rebellion. By this means they often keep alive resentment and discontent, the small beginnings of which they should in

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wisdom have turned aside. If they would really help there is no surer way than by upholding school discipline and the teacher's authority.

"Mother thinks it was very unkind of teacher, and so do I," has been the beginning of innumerable school tragedies. If parents suspect a teacher of unfairness a few quiet words outside of school will probably set the matter straight. But the child should not know that the visit has been made, or the words spoken.

Nothing helps a child more substantially to surmount the hard places of school life than the firm support of his parents. Parents who are unfaltering in their allegiance to the school spirit, and who uphold the teachers through the crises and climaxes of the school year have their reward, for they are sure to see the best results the system is capable of producing worked out in their children's characters. Such parents, by example, incite their children to the same high-grade quality of obedience and confidence which they themselves make it a business to express.

There are always good sides to every school, and, with a little looking, fine qualities to be found in all the teachers. Parents can do much by speaking of these. There is no discouragement to a young child greater than to hear from his parents' lips slighting or jesting remarks about his school. Without loyalty

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and enthusiasm the school will fail in some mysterious way to do its best for the child, and the pupil who is lukewarm in his allegiance will draw very little upon the real strength of its guarded inner life.

One of the greatest trials a teacher has to meet is the irregularity of pupils. Irregularity causes more failures in school life than any other one thing.

A certain amount of irregularity is of course unavoidable. Little children can not go out in the winter with colds and coughs, they must nurse their sore throats, they can not face heavy storms. But this is not the irregularity which discourages teachers almost to the giving-up point. The irregularity of which they complain is chiefly controlled by the parents. It is the parents, then, who should see that no cause but that of definite illness provides children with an excuse to leave school early or to miss it altogether.

A morning of school routine, the necessary afternoon exercise, and the preparation of lessons before bedtime (which preparation is still unfortunately demanded by many schools) about fills the short winter days, yet many other occupations are crowded in by parents whose love seems to have failed in properly estimating the strength and endurance of their little ones.

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Not long ago a very strong plea was made by a leading specialist in the diseases of children for fewer distractions outside of school. He placed the many engagements of growing children in the forefront of the causes that make for shattered nerves. He stated that the modern child is overloaded with claims upon time, strength, and vitality; that it is impossible for him to do all that is demanded of him and at the same time do any kind of justice to the legitimate demands of school.

A mother was heard to say complacently not many days ago: "My little girls leave school early twice a week to learn fancy dancing. They are so graceful, I just love to see them!" Another mother boasted this last winter, that her children had been out to parties, or to the play, or to dancing-class three afternoons of every week. Still another mentioned later that her child of three had been invited to a box-party at the theatre!

Now, is not this unfair to the child? A certain margin must be saved every day for nothing but just natural play and fun. This, together with the demands of school, is about all the average child can accomplish without nervous strain. The holidays and the long summers provide leisure for gaiety, the only leisure that the child really may call his own, for during eight months in the year school, with its

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necessary relaxation, demands about all that he has of time and effort if he gives his best.

Encourage the child to talk of his daily experiences, but beware of tale-bearing and gossip! There is a vast difference between animated discussion of the happenings of school life and that most unlovely trait a child can possess, telling tales. The mother can not afford to listen to tales. She must get her information at first hand, herself studying the child's friends and teachers. She must guard herself from any temptation to listen to the exaggerated stories he will surely bring home if he is given the slightest encouragement.

It sometimes seems that the child for whose benefit the modern school system was evolved has very little to do in the matter of his own education, that everything is done for him, that education is handed out to him, as it were, ready-made, without much effort on his part!

Yet there are a few things the child has to do for himself if his school career is to be successful. He must be loyal to his school and its traditions, obedient to his teachers, and conscientious in his work. No one can do these things for him. In the youngest child can be cultivated a sense of responsibility, a realization that he is as important as any other pupil in the school, and that he has an individual

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duty, as great as any other member of his class, toward keeping up the school standard.

A child old enough to go to school is old enough to do his best. He owes it to his teachers. He also owes it to his parents, whose intelligence and training he represents in the school body-corporate and who have given him advantages and opportunities often at great personal cost.

There has been a reaction lately against the old method of home-study. In fact some of the rather advanced schools are reorganizing their work, that it may accord more nearly with the later theories offered by modern educators.

The new thought in regard to this old question seems to be about this: The young of all species sleep early, relax, play, and eat before sleeping. Therefore, according to nature, the very worst time in the whole day in which to do any work requiring close application is in the evening. The theory is even pushed still further; work done at the end of the day is practically dull repetition and without results. There is a natural fatigue in the evening and we can not get away from it. Shall we urge the children to struggle against it? Modern thought emphatically answers "no," that such struggle is harmful. The nerve-cells are being recreated at the end of the day and to push them on to effort is unwise.

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What, then, you may ask, do our theorists offer instead of the evening study-hour? They suggest a better mental training in the great matter of concentration, so that the study-preparation periods given in school may be made greater use of.

Question the children and see if the periods given for study in school are not usually frittered away in doing a host of unessential things, drawing, fixing up the desk, reading, scribbling surreptitious notes!

Two study periods are almost always given in school, and often more, so that if every power is alert and fresh, if concentration is cultivated, and the children taught to make use of it, it should be easy to prepare the next day's work—certainly in the lower grades.

Better work at school and no work at home is the new cry. If this is made practicable, is found to "work," one thing is sure to follow—fewer nervous break-downs from over-study, and a better grade of physical fitness.

The strain of five or six hours of school is great, particularly to those children who are the most likely to work too hard at home.

If home-study were to be abolished I believe the difficult things, the things that really count, the heart and kernel of education, would be easier to

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secure, and in the securing leave no scar of wearied brain and broken health behind.

For the child who is still following the old plan of studying at home, every facility should be given him to make his application to his work as easy as possible. A convenient table, a good light, a quiet room, plenty of fresh air! These help the weary little brain to accomplish its task, and enable the fagged and drooping body to continue its part.

Too often the child is allowed to study in the same room where other people are talking and laughing, under a poor light, with his books held upon his lap, or painfully up before his tired eyes.

It is generally thought not to be a good thing for the mother to study with her child except very occasionally, if he is greatly over-tired, or the task seems temporarily beyond his strength. She is fulfilling her duty if she provides him with a well-aired, well-lighted room, and sees that he goes there regularly to prepare his lessons for the coming day. He will be the better for meeting and overcoming his difficulties alone.

It is always a cause of anxiety to parents if their child does not seem to advance as rapidly as do his friends. Development is a strange thing, and it must be remembered that brilliancy in childhood is largely temperamental and often means nothing at all. We

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see the proverbs of the "Tortoise and the Hare" worked out again and again, and the child who is earnest and who plods faithfully on is he who is likely to make the highest record at the end of the course. Superficial brilliancy is attractive, and we, weak human mothers that we are, envy it, but it is not a sound characteristic to find. It does not wear and is usually coupled with extreme nervousness and may even have for its background a shallow nature without any true or lasting inward power.

And, is not the so-called backward child often only the sensitive child, misunderstood? The tendency of the sensitive child is to allow himself to be pushed to the wall, and once out of the usual line of progress along which the other children of the school are placidly walking, he suffers greatly.

The sensitive child feels keenly each blunder or mistake, and he is always ready to believe any one who tells him that he has done wrong or is stupid.

I heard this very pathetic story the other day: A teacher had just lately been engaged to give some private lessons to a very sweet little girl of ten. The child's mother hinted that she was "backward," and that it was because of this that the extra tutoring was necessary. Imagine the teacher's despair when she found, after a few lessons, that she could not even get the child to listen to her various explana-

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tions. "I can't learn it; I can't, I can't!" said the child, hiding her face in her arms. "Daddy says I'm dumb, and I am dumb, and I can't learn it!"

It was only after weeks of the most careful and sympathetic assistance that this child's distrust of self was overcome. Finally by praise and encouragement the teacher did overcome it, and she ended her story by saying that it was really pathetic to see how the little girl's nature seemed to rebound like a young tree which has been released from an unnatural weight, when she began to realize that she was not dumb and could learn just as well as anybody else.

The child in this story had had her whole life clouded because of the careless words of an adored father. That daddy should think her dumb and say that he thought so, hopelessly crippled every effort she put forth to try to make something of herself.

To many children snubs or criticisms of this kind would not mean anything, or at worst would only go skin-deep, but to the sensitive, harsh criticism or even careless criticism, paralyzes in every branch of development, until at last, pushed into the background of life, such children stand sadly apart, cold, uncomforted, and unhappy until drawn out again into the natural current of development by the love and warmth of some one who understands.

"Temperament is the controlling factor in every

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life, the unchangeable center round which character is built," and probably no phase of temperament is as difficult to handle as sensitiveness.

The first thing to do for the sensitive child is to try to recreate in him belief in himself. Help him along his difficult path by the encouragement of praise whenever you can justly give it. Never let such a child think that he can not do what other children do, or is not as attractive as other children are. It is fatal for him to hear his weaknesses spoken of by those he loves and wishes to please.

It would be far better to strike a sensitive child outright than to give him the wounds of a snub such as this: " You had better stay home next time, you're the most awkward thing I ever saw," or " I'm ashamed to walk along the street with you, you're so tall and lanky," or " can't you talk? you haven't said a word the whole evening." Remarks like these from a much-loved mother or father are like sharp knives in the heart of the sensitive child, and instead of helping him to be less awkward, or to carry his unfortunate height more gracefully, or to be a better conversationalist, they absolutely petrify his efforts and render him more helpless than before.

Shield the sensitive child from criticism and fault-finding as carefully as you would shield a delicate baby from the snows of winter. Remember that

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every word you say to him sinks down into his heart, for he is fearfully handicapped. Temperamentally he can not throw things off lightly or forget unkind words, and this is not his own fault. He is to be pitied and helped rather than teased or blamed.

Over-sensitiveness is often only a mark of immaturity, and if the child is treated humanely and kindly for the few years when he is trying to find himself amid the many distractions of his new and unknown personality, he will suddenly wake up as from a bad dream, leaving his unhappy sensitiveness behind with his toy-horse and outgrown pinafores.

But it is quite possible for mismanagement during the sensitive years to leave scars and hurts for life, and there are many grown men and women today who shrink from the very names of persons who tortured and distressed them as children.

A step behind the sensitive child stands the really backward child. Until recently there has been no way of writing or speaking of a case of mental deficiency in exact terms, or of grading such a case. We have been very vague indeed heretofore as to exactly what we meant by "backward," "retarded," "defective," and like terms. But now with the invention of Professor Binet's scheme of gradation and classification, the various ages are used as milestones, and the degrees of intelligence normal to

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each age have been so carefully studied as to be safe, we now think, for general use. Professor Binet has devised eleven groups of tests, each group applicable to one year of the ages between three and thirteen. If the child answers the tests set for his age, he is normal. If he answers only those intended for a year earlier, he is one year behind his age. If he can only answer the test questions three years behind his age, he is classed among defectives. These tests may aid a teacher in studying the mental phases of childhood, but most emphatically should they not be used by the mother or with any sense of finality, or ever for scientific purposes, except by an experienced psychologist. Anything like exactitude in results can only be obtained by the expert, not by the amateur.

## X

### AMUSEMENT

"You must struggle or you will degenerate—even if only with rhyme or counterpoint, not necessary for bread. 'Effort is the law,' as Ruskin said; whether for a livelihood or for enjoyment. Living things are the product of the struggle for existence; we are thus evolved strugglers by constitution: and directly we cease to struggle we forfeit the possibilities of our birthright."

"Thou, O God," says Leonardo, "hast given all good things to man at the price of labor."

A WELL-KNOWN teacher, when asked to define in six words the most serious omission in the modern education of the child, replied: "The failure to train childhood's imagination."

Yet, with the best intention, how are we to encourage and sustain in children their unique and fertile power of "make believe," in this age, when mechanical devices to provide pleasure "ready-made" confront us on every side?

There was a time when boys had to invent their toys, even shaping them with their own hands, and little girls had home-made, home-dressed dolls. Do you imagine for an instant that there was less play

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then, less fun and fewer games? Indeed, no! The child holds priceless within himself the power to create, adapt, discover, plan, contrive. Even without a single toy he is happy, for he can invent a host of friends, and act out unaided a thousand thrilling games.

Why spoil this power which has been the crown and glory of childhood since the world began?

Yet how seldom we find courage to pursue the simplicity of this ideal! We can not shake ourselves free from the thought that children profit by what is bought for them, by the bulk of advantage and opportunity handed out to them regardless of what they contribute from within.

In fact, be the child rich or poor, it is only in as much as he quickens with his own spirit the dry materials of his life that he begins to grow. Only in proportion as he gives out the priceless qualities of service and struggle does he advance. It is not enough to buy him advantages; he must use them, convert them to spiritual ends by consecrating himself, in service, to his generation.

Children gain nothing by "being amused," for only through the golden gate of play and pretend will they enter the real kingdom of their youth.

Even as a baby the child may be taught to lie

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out on a rug upon the floor, and play for hours with his toys, allowing his mother full freedom of the too-short hours. This habit if begun in time grows as the child grows, until at last it is one of the strongest forces in his life. He is independent of others, for he has his joys within himself, and a richness born of inventive play comes into his life. His imagination is developed.

It is a mistaken kindness to amuse a child, study for him, play with him, and use our will-power and initiative where he should be learning to use his. Throw him back upon himself that his imagination may grow. The power to see, grasp, and use little things is what has made men and women great throughout the ages.

We may often be comforted by the thought that the finest characters and the greatest geniuses have had no worldly advantage, and the very least of what we call "opportunity."

Never by external advantages, by amusement, by pleasure, will we be able to make children anything, though we may sometimes be able to help them after they have first learned to help themselves.

The priceless thing we *can* do for them is to create within their souls in childhood a certain power, almost mysterious, which enables them to draw from their surroundings whatever may there be hid of

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enlightenment and strength; a power full of imagination and faith by means of which they are able to rise gradually to great things upon the silent drudgery of every day. It is this power to see and use little things which has made the seer, the prophet, the artist, the poet, and will go on making such out of those little children who are growing up at our side to-day.

As I write I think of several persons it has been my privilege to know, who have by imagination and this same inner faith, wrested every shred of mental and spiritual nourishment from their surroundings, with the result that from apparently nothing they have made of themselves pillars of spiritual strength and usefulness.

This power can be strengthened in a child by teaching him to be self-reliant, by helping him at every turn to use his own powers, never allowing other persons to do for him that which he should do for himself, and by endeavoring to draw and strengthen—never to repress—the *personal* in him.

We can not avoid multiplicity. A very mass of detail has been thrown in our way. The ease with which we shop, the installment plan, the telephone, the subway, the department store, all complicate life and increase its tension. The cheap automobile has

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opened whole areas of opportunity for people without much money.

With all this has come a new desire to crowd as much into each day as we can. It is so "easy" to do things, to make plans, to buy, to get around. And this has its effect upon the children.

We must have our brains "set to understand the necessity of elimination" for ourselves and for our children if we and they are to exist. Elimination is quite as important in pleasure as it is in work.

The over-stimulated child, so common a sight in America, where there is, as some one has said, a very "congestion of opportunity" set to ensnare him, is in himself a pathetic witness to the fact that his parents' affectionate "pleasure-cramming" has not worked to his good!

What is over-stimulating a child?

It is buying him ready-made pleasures, giving him artificial amusement, handing out to him toys, games, and entertainment, in no way evolved from his own consciousness, or the result of his own effort. Nothing will so quickly hamper his development as will having too many pleasures and too much to do, too many opportunities, too much purchased "fun."

Parties, the theatre, and moving pictures should be spread very thin in childhood; toys and games

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given with discretion. I know a certain young mother who, after the children are in bed on Christmas night, steals down to the deserted tree and takes away whole armfuls of "undesirable" toys. At least so she designates them, and the artificial dolls, the jumping rabbits, the elaborate devices to afford ready-made amusement are put quickly out of sight.

It is indeed wise to have a censorship of the play-things that come into the nursery. Mechanical toys destroy the imagination. Toys should in a simple and direct fashion point out to the child the path ahead—the path which leads to useful manhood and womanhood, not to an enervated, purposeless, over-indulged youth.

Play can and should be one of life's great teachers. Play is the outward expression of surplus energy. Some modern theorists emphasize its instinctive character. They tell us that children use in their every-day play the same powers that their ancestors used in getting food, in subduing enemies, in keeping house and in caring for the little ones. Each of these instinctive qualities, to become so valuable as the years pass on, has its first expression, its development, and its perfection, by means of play, lying thus in the safe back-waters of existence until life shall demand its serious help.

Play looked upon in this light, as an instinctive

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means of preparation for life, takes on a more interesting aspect, and we realize that in directing play we are not misspending energy, but helping in the formation of character.

So, do not interfere much with the children's play for the first six years of their life by buying them elaborate toys. The more instinctive play is allowed to be, the better. Let them depend upon their own resources, and learn early in their little lives to look for amusement within themselves.

Imagination, as the basis of play, reaches its height at about six or seven, after which children begin to use thought. Games which demand intellect then become popular and the more difficult the contests the more interested the children are, showing that imagination and intellect are beginning to work together, which is as it should be. This team-work in the building of character can never take place in children who have been automatically fed out ready-made amusement and artificial play.

We have more to consider than the mere quality of amusement, important as this is, we want amusement or play to be adapted to the age and mental development of the child, so that the pleasure of achieving success in certain games or occupations, and of overcoming their difficulties, may not be dimmed by mental fatigue.

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For instance, a child who could cross-stitch nicely would be probably greatly depressed by her efforts to embroider, and a boy who could ride a pony and feel properly exhilarated and manly in so doing, might be thrown from a horse and even feel himself a coward. Before allowing the children to take up a sport or game it is wise to be sure that the development and mental strength of each is equal to its demands. Much harm has been done by making play difficult, and by influencing children to try to do things outside the limit of their development.

Children have a right to a certain amount of success as the result of effort. Effort without success paralyzes initiative. One of the great results of the new movement of measurement in education is to insure to every child the value of being able to see the success of his efforts. The development of each child is measured by certain mental tests, he is only given work that he can do, and do well. This theory can be excellently applied to amusement.

A realization that some children fatigue much more easily than others should help the mother in a wise regulating of their amusements. I have frequently heard teachers complain of wandering thoughts in the school-room, yet as a matter of fact, those who have made a scientific study of the child say that little children in the first grade at school

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can not concentrate upon one thing without rest or change for more than ten minutes, and that the ability to devote attention increases very gradually indeed, reaching, even in the highest grades, only a stretch of forty or fifty minutes. There seems to be quite a difference in the amount of attention a child can give without fatigue, and, as amusements should never be carried beyond the point of physical weariness, each child requires special study, his play hours and amusements gauged accordingly.

I took two little girls not long ago to an outdoor representation of Robin Hood. As the play progressed it was easily seen that what turned out to be a profitable amusement for one only fatigued and exhausted the other. Try as we may, every child demands individual study. A benefit to one child may prove only a snare to another, and our plans for the development of each must of necessity stand ready to be diminished or accented at a moment's notice.

There is a natural tendency in the child to contract and draw back into himself when he is not understood, or if he is given too much to do, just as there is the same natural tendency in him to expand and advance when the stimuli of his life are favorable and sympathetic.

Only the mother can apply the "right stimuli

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at the right time"; she realizes instinctively that the home is the very best place in which a child can possibly mature. Nowhere does he run less risk of meeting abrupt discouragement or the fatal effect of too little definite control.

As the child progresses he is sure to go through a phase which we may call the passion of ownership. While under it he "collects" everything. Do not laugh or snub him, for it is a deeply implanted human trait, this desire to possess! Ownership is one of the keenest of man's joys, but ownership which is not in some way connected with labor and effort is robbed of half its glory—teach the children this—and that it is the *act of collecting*, not the things collected, which gives possession its lasting joy.

Ownership, to mean anything real, can not be enjoyed apart from labor and effort. It is only after we have striven that we taste true joy. Stanley Hall speaks thus of the glorification of work: "Here lies the true value of manual training in our schools; that the child may learn how much more valuable is the article which he had made with his own hands by his own labor. It gives a knowledge from whence the sweetness of possession derives its source. The technique is of practical use, the learning how is valuable, but much more valuable is it for the child to learn the divinity of labor. No one who has

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worked with hammer and saw, and learned how rich in pleasure is the possession of an article derived from hard labor, can consider work a degradation. It puts the child in sympathy with labor and the laborer. Looked at from this point of view, no one factor has greater possibilities of developing the child than that of manual training. It puts the child in sympathy with men. He rubs in large grains of the stuff we call humanity, and for this reason it is essential that the child should be allowed to make things he wants and also that the things made should *belong to him.*"

So when the children clamor for tools, for books in which to "collect," or for boxes in which to hoard their little treasures, try to see in their immature and primitive efforts a manifestation of the psychology of ownership, and let them work with their hands that they may later enjoy with all their highest nature.

The precious force of individuality will surely pour itself into some such channel as I have indicated, a preparation in a small, obscure, and halting way, for the bigger creative actions of later life, realize that it is most natural for it so to do, and that the child's great demand of his mother is sympathy and a safe place in his home for self-expression.

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Perhaps I should not have been shocked—but I admit it that I was—to hear a lovely young mother say the other day, “ My children go to the ‘ movies ’ in the village every afternoon; they drive the pony down themselves and stay for hours.” Moving pictures, the handmaid and tool of the age, though all right at their best, are quite as great in perverting innocence as they are in instructing ignorance. And to be quite honest, as usually seen, are they not a sickly food for children, without true nourishment, and do not the very qualities which make a film successful provide an atmosphere of unnatural excitement and unhealthy nervous tension?

Take the boys and girls to see a really good play once in a while, but not often, lest they exhaust in youth those pleasures which are meant to enrich their later life. Children are essentially dramatic. They rival in their own imagination the wildest photo-play ever yet conceived. A very few good plays spread over all the years of childhood are sufficient to direct their dramatic sense, and to create what we call taste.

“ The last few years have been epoch-making in the attitude of the public toward recreation,” says Lee F. Hanmer in a recent lecture on “ Fundamentals in Play and Recreation.” “ A new light has broken. We have discovered that the right development of

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our boys and girls comes only by serious thought and self-sacrificing toil. We are convinced that it is much better to form than to reform; that attention should be given to the causes of wrong-doing, and thus avoid the necessity of dealing with the soul-harrowing results. The day of positive suggestion instead of repression is at hand. Instead of 'Thou shalt not' the word is 'Thou shalt.' Instead of focusing effort upon the suppression of an undesirable pastime, the desired end is accomplished by promoting recreation that is wholesome and attractive."

The mid-Victorian youth with his emaciated features, flowing hair and ready tears is no more. Gone also is the queen of the novels of long ago, she who, a mass of weak sentimentalism and wishy-washy romance, reclined upon her sofa and ruled the destinies of man. The day of flabby moral and mental life is over. In fact, the day of weakness in any department of life is over. "Thou shalt" is indeed the great cry of our age.

It is bone and sinew we look for to-day. It is that quality which in common words enables youth to "make good" that our children must have if they are to endure. This they can get only by being fed from the nursery upon food that is life-giving. Their bodies grow according to what they eat.

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Their minds grow also just as surely in proportion to the kind of stuff we put in their way. This they absorb and convert into the bone and sinew of the mind.

Amusement and play are not negligible. They may be made powerful helps in child-training. It pays to understand just how greatly they may help, and to use them in assisting the child to reach the stage of highest efficiency.

## XI

### BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

“Consider what you have in the smallest chosen library. A company of the wisest and wittiest men that could be picked out of all civil countries in a thousand years have set in best order the results of their learning and wisdom. The men themselves were hid and inaccessible, solitary, impatient of interruption, fenced by etiquette; but the thought which they did not uncover to their bosom friend is here written out in transparent words to us, the strangers of another age.”

—EMERSON.

PHILOSOPHY, Plato tells us, begins with wonder.

Wonder, the seed of all intellectual life, is planted in every heart. Almost as soon as the nature of the little child begins to unfold are manifested its pure white buds. Wonder is in very truth, the beginning of all things.

The child's whole attitude toward life is one of supreme effort to draw into his soul new things. He goes forward with an ecstasy of eagerness to seize upon new experiences, and to make them his own.

Childhood is characterized by a great hunger of the mind. If one may use such an expression, the child holds out little tentacles of intelligent wonder,

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ready at an instant's notice to fasten themselves upon a new thought. To those who love and watch children this avidity of the mind is nothing short of miraculous. Wonder, discovery, advance! They are the keynotes of a healthy youth!

As children enjoy pure belief in everything and everybody they have no developed critical sense. All that they see and hear and read sinks down unquestioned into their little minds only later to be worked up into ideas. Children can not criticise because they have no standard of comparison. They simply absorb. It is only as they grow older that what they have absorbed begins to tell and begins to color their ideals.

It is this quality in the child of absorbing without being sufficiently developed to criticise or compare which makes it so vitally important to hand out only such things as will strengthen him—only thoughts and ideas that will become stepping-stones in his life, not stumbling-blocks.

Books can be made stepping-stones—and there are none that mount more surely!

Reading is probably the greatest of all the many channels by which inspiration, development, and general spiritual uplift can come to a child. Through books, indeed, come to many children almost all the dream and glory of their life.

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A child who loves books has a second existence, the joys of which no one but himself can comprehend.

Love of reading, besides being a factor in development, is a valuable resource. To the sick child, the lonely child, the child who has few toys, reading is often an only means of entrance into the enchanted land of keen delight where all children have the longing and right to dwell.

It is not a waste of time to try to gain for a child this great resource. Love of books may help him over many hard places in his life. Begin in the nursery, almost in the cradle, to read to him.

Books, and before books, story-telling and pictures, are quick to arouse the mind. Once aroused, imitation of things known and loved comes surely.

Noble pictures and great books stimulate to dreams of heroism, to noble thoughts and to a desire to love and serve others.

Children are unconsciously formed and guided in many ways by the ideals which have sunk noiselessly into their hearts from books.

To begin a child's reading in the right way give him at the very start in some form or other *the classics*, stories that have withstood the rocking of empires and the fall of Kings. There is no need to bring children up on mediocrity in any line now-

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adays. Educators and theorists everywhere are struggling to provide the *best* free or at little cost. Books as well as playgrounds, clinics, nurseries, and lectures are now brought to the people's level and are made possible for all.

It is encouraging to see that so much is being done to give children the right kind of mental food. The best artists give their time to illustrating children's books. The keynote of modern publication is an earnest effort to reduce all knowledge to the common denominator of the child.

Everywhere is manifest the great change which has taken place in the public's idea of what children should be given to read.

Where is the autocratic, terrifying, sentimental, and usually religious story-book designed to convey moral lessons to the young? It is no more. The once popular "series" of books about more or less stupid people, told in a more or less stupid way, are going if not quite gone.

Instead we have natural history, animal-lore, poetry, hero-stories, legends, biography, history, myth—these subjects, which represent the best spiritual output and the highest aspirations of man since the beginning of civilized life, are to-day being handed down to children, are everywhere being adapted and prepared by authors and artists of dis-

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tinction for the development and education of the twentieth-century child.

Now what is the *object* of all this? Why are the poor, insufficient, mediocre books of the past being done away with and utterly wiped out? Why this united effort to give children nothing but the *best*?

It is because we realize, as the world has never realized it before, *the dangers and the opportunities of youth*.

The Jesuits say, "Give *us* the first seven years and you may have the rest." They know by a lifetime of astute watching over souls that a careful planting is bound to bring the harvest, and that what a child learns to love and reverence in his youth he never forgets—never, though he live to be a hundred years!

Oh, the opportunity of youth! If we could but appreciate it, and in time!

Just in proportion as the opportunity is great, so also is danger. Ideals once shattered, reverence once blotted out, cheap substitutes once given for the real, the sacred, and the eternal in life—these things once done and how soon it becomes "too late," youth with its golden *now* of promise and hope and opportunity is gone forever!

A mother told me the other day that she had just burned up the Dotty Dimple books which ~~had~~

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been given to her little girls at Christmas. Not that they did any *harm*, she exclaimed, but that they failed to do *good*. They took up time, and gave nothing back. They did not contain (to her way of thinking) a single stimulating, valuable, or uplifting thought. Do you see the point? Not that they did harm, but that they did *not* do good!

For the very reason that the potential power in books is so great, that the child is really formed, though unconsciously, by what he reads, only have the best papers coming to the house, only buy the very best books.

If children are fed on good books from the beginning they are likely to continue to love what is worth while. A true and cultivated taste in the parents is sure to have its appointed influence.

If children are surrounded with cheap comic papers, vulgar Sunday supplements, and novels that are trash, what can be expected other than that they will absorb the atmosphere of mediocrity and eventually show in themselves the anaemic type of mind that has grown upon the nourishment of lifeless food?

Every bit of cheap, tawdry art a child sees, every vulgar word he hears, every holy thing that is ridiculed before him is a blow at his higher nature.

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A little bit of himself goes. He has added to his weakness instead of to his strength.

It is the slipping back a step here and a step there that makes the actual advance of moral life so uncertain. Little backward steps, blows half heard, perhaps unnoticed, undermine the strongest character, and gradually pull down in the child the spiritual city from the walls of which he will be called to fight the world.

In no way is this moral waste and devastation more certainly accomplished than by the reading of worthless books.

Yet a censorship of reading for the older child who really loves books is almost impossible. It is indeed difficult to guide a child's roving mind after he begins to go to school, and after he has once tasted the joys of the intellectual world.

If he has had the right beginning, and the love of good reading is ingrained in him, do not be afraid.

The normal child who eats and sleeps and exercises as he should will have very little harm done him from books. Like a healthy animal, though he browse where he will, he really eats only that which will agree with him. He really absorbs into his life only the elements that do him good.

Turn him loose in the library; he will read a little of everything, but if his book-love has been begun

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in the right way, nature will direct his appetite, and he will gradually come to find his friends in the great silent shelves, and as he develops he will make them one by one his own. The glory and joy as he finds them out and realizes their immortal kinship to himself who can describe!

A recent magazine held this helpful illustration of how two different mothers handled the same problem—the problem of training the children's judgment in regard to books:

"Two boys, John and Henry, were caught by their mothers reading '*The Boy Burglar of Chicago*' John's mother took her boy's copy away from him, threw it into the ash pan and forbade him to read any more such books under penalty of 'a good, sound thrashing.' That afternoon the mother went out, and John, of course, got the book out of the ash pan and finished reading it, as any normal boy would do.

"Henry's mother suggested that they read the book together. Mother read it out loud, and somehow it didn't sound right to the boy when the story came from his mother's lips.

"'It isn't much, it is true,' said the mother, 'but let us finish it.' But the boy protested. 'Well,' said the mother, 'suppose we read a story like it, but which I think is better.'

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"The boy was interested and the mother read 'Robin Hood.' The boy voted it 'great,' and asked John to come over the next day and listen to it. Then the mother continued with 'The Boys' King Arthur,' and Fenimore Cooper's 'Leather-stockings Tales.'

"Meanwhile 'The Boy Burglar of Chicago' lay on the library table where Henry could get it, but it was never taken up or finished. It was simply two ways that two mothers handled the same situation but secured different results."

This little story holds a very good moral. Boys, and girls, too, would rather be good than bad. Give them a chance. It is often only because their minds are not used for good that they listen to the temptings of bad books. Find out what wholesome line of reading pleases the children, and keep them well supplied. Do not let their minds bubbling with priceless activity lie idle for even a day. The surest and often the quickest way to correct a fault or overcome evil is to suggest a counter-activity that will energize the whole mental system afresh for good.

At the risk of finding many parents who will disagree with my selection, I am going to add to these thoughts a short list of books which have passed the test of popularity in my home and which I have found

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always stimulating, helpful, and thoroughly absorbing to the children in each various stage of their development.

Such a list must, of course, begin with our universal mother—Mother-Goose, then follow quickly such books as the Arabian Nights, *Æsop's Fables*, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Tom Brown's School Days, Little Women, and all Miss Alcott's works; One Thousand Poems for Children, edited by Roger Ingpen, or some other good compilation. Grimm's and Andersen's Fairy Tales, Swift's Gulliver's Travels, Hawthorne's Wonder Book and Tanglewood Tales, The Andrew Lang Fairy Books of many hues, and Mrs. Lang's delightful book of Saints and Heroes. Kipling's Jungle Books, The Boy's Froissart, Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer, Harris's Uncle Remus. Pyle's Robin Hood and the Story of Launcelot. Hammarström's The Adventures of Two Ants, Seton Thompson's Wild Animals I Have Known, and many similar books upon insect, plant, and animal life. These the children particularly love.

Then come A. D. Crake's Chronicles of *Æscendeme*, Cooper's Last of the Mohicans, Parkman's Conspiracy of the Pontiac, Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare, Stevenson's Treasure Island, Kidnapped, David Balfour, and some of Scott and

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Dickens, but here I may stop, for by the time the children have made fast friends of even these few books, no list will be needed. They shall have entered the land of books for all their lives, and ahead in the misty distance will stand beckoning them onward, new friends, new experiences, new delights grown out of the old, an ever widening circle in which they feel happy, familiar, safe, and forever at home.

“ There is no frigate like a book  
To take us lands away,  
Nor any coursers like a page  
Of prancing poetry.

“ This traverse may the poorest take  
Without oppress or toll;  
How frugal is the chariot  
That bears a human soul! ”

## XII

### INDIVIDUALITY.

"Said the Bottle that was old to the Wine that was new:  
'I was made long ago, ere the grapes of you grew;  
So, adapt yourself to me, and learn how to be content—  
It's unsafe and demagogic and *outrageous* to ferment!'

"Said the Wine that was new to the Bottle that was old:  
'The power that stirs in me is beyond your strength to hold;  
Though I send you into pieces, that power I shall fulfill,  
For it's ferment that I must—and it's ferment that I will.'

"There is something, it is true, in the Bottle's point of view,  
But—the victory always rests with the Wine that is new."  
—“The Tug of War,” by PRISCILLA LEONARD, published in  
*The Outlook.*

“NINE times out of ten it is over the Bridge of Sighs that we pass the narrow gulf from youth to manhood.” So Balzac speaks of youth’s progress, further warning us that a failure to see and understand “The Bridge of Sighs” is responsible for many of the tragic separations between parents and children—separations which unfortunately occur just as the child begins to be interesting, just as he begins to be himself.

After all, why should this tragedy take place in a world where every man and woman has paid the price of individuality by just the experiences condemned in his or her own child?

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What man or woman but can look back to months, or it may be to years, of foolish, stupid blundering, before he or she really arrived at an understanding and control of self?

Yet, forgetful of this, the parents cry out, "they no longer love us," "we have no influence over them," "they are unkind," "we cannot understand them, and they do not wish to understand us," forgetting all about the once familiar Bridge of Sighs, and forgetting also that with sound heredity and a good home influence, in this natural fight for individuality, there is really nothing to fear. The end is unmistakable, however devious the way.

And what of the child? He is making vigorously toward the light. Instinct tells him that ahead lie the broad fields of individual life. Despite the efforts of his parents to frighten him back into the shambles of his old self, there to continue to feed him with the "small sweet biscuit of unobjectionable knowledge," he will have none of it. He is looking for his own romance, out there somewhere in the limitless space beyond, and he is backed in his search by the strongest impulse in all the world, an impulse without which the human race would end as in the twinkling of an eye.

The white veil of childhood grows more transparent every year until it is at last pierced by eyes

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that see the world beyond the nursery window. The child's lips are already curved to hail from the outer shadows a congenial spirit not of his parents' choice. He has already begun to be.

Stepping out into the full play of life for the first time, who does he meet? His angry parents standing directly in his path waving the red flag of disapproval and restraint. They have found it impossible to bear with equanimity the personal hurt of divergence in the child who has hitherto been a simple proposition.

It is a sad fact that the better parents are, the more earnest, loving and intelligent, the surer they are to receiving into their hearts the bitter fruit of this particular kind of disappointment. Come it invariably does as time goes on, and the children are carried like chips over a waterfall, on, on to personal achievement and destiny at any cost.

Yet the child is the victim of his age. He must walk over the Bridge of Sighs because nature wills it, because it is nature's plan for individual development.

Not to understand the reality of the nervous upheaval the child is enduring, not to know that it is a necessary phase of physical progress, is to lose the pass-key to all the closed doors of his new growth.

Without forbearance and sympathy a series of

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miserable encounters begin. The older heads wag and criticise; the child rebels, recoils, and many times passes by on the other side to a personal Elysium from which, it is quite likely, the parents are excluded forever.

Melancholy, turbulence, and rebellion are necessary to the period of adolescence—if parents would only give this thought sufficient proportion in the solving of their problems.

In the natural process and development the child is a child pure and simple until he arrives at about eleven or twelve years of age. Then it is that he begins the second part of his career; that part which is a preparation for his maturity; that part in which he is uncertain, aspiring, and full of problems. This we call adolescence. Now it is that he begins to see before him the dawn of personal life, begins to realize, as Victor Hugo quaintly puts it, that he is the “tadpole of an Archangel.” It is only natural that his balance should be upset, it is only natural that he should pass through a time of distorted half lights until the period of adolescence meets that of maturity and the little cycle is complete.

Under usual conditions the influence of the parents decreases as the child enters each of the three stages here described, slowly withdrawing its support as he becomes able to stand alone. Some-

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times instead of decreasing it does just the opposite, until at last individuality is hopelessly bound and the child enters upon an enervated apathetic maturity—a fruit rotting before really ripe and green forever at the core.

The thing not always easy to realize is that it is natural, quite natural, indeed, for parental influence to be withdrawn as children make the journey across the Bridge of Sighs.

To no one, however near, is given the privilege of eternal authority or of destroying by ridicule or interference that which is dear and essential to another soul. Parents may be autocratic in babyhood, may discipline in childhood, may guide and influence in youth, but it is not theirs to say to their growing boys and girls "go where I point."

By all means let them lead, by example and tactful suggestion, not losing sight of the fact that there is a certain amount of leeway demanded by every individual soul if it is to develop. It can not be coerced or compelled to its own good.

Almost anything is possible at adolescence. Character is malleable, talents are just springing into life, all is molten, still unset, waiting for the forming finger of destiny to advance and choose the shape.

A space of troubled silence and the potential sweetness ripples into blossoms, the most marked

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talent takes its place at the helm of the young life, and, under the eye of love, the character begins to settle upon its immortal pedestal. Parents who think of this hold their breath and wait for the miracle, fearing to destroy, hedging their child in on all sides with their utmost love.

To step in here and impose personal whims and prejudices is a vandalism unforgivable to those who hold sacred the mysteries of individual development. To ridicule, destroy, and wound is only too common, for the parents will not see that before them stands an independent spirit, ready to die, if need be, for what it reverences and holds dear.

What, then, can they do? Only stand aside and trust to the work that has already been done, to the seeds that have been planted in the nursery days.

To oppose the instinctive march of a child's nature is either to cripple his best effort, or to force him outside the home, where self-expression is less obstructed.

His instinctive march keeps in step with a music the parents are too often oblivious of, and has been pre-ordained by a force far stronger than they can possibly comprehend.

I can only say, help his groping hands to find the throttle of power. Put in them the means of self-direction by teaching him to use all his gifts. Draw

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each weakling of endowment out into the day. Emphasize the high-lights of his being, assist him to subdue its crudities. *Help him to build.*

His chosen form of self-expression may be very different from what you had hoped to see, but remember that he is an individual soul, to stand or fall by his own effort; he must advance, and to deny him spiritual independence is to sign his death warrant.

Our children begin, it must be remembered, where we end, not, as we sometimes would like to have it, where we began. Though their root is in us, their progress is away from us, and it can be no other way. Strange as it may seem, children are not willing to be turned out into the world exact little patterns of the parental die. They wish to be trees, not twigs, and this stirring impulse, the most beautiful and inspiring thing in all life, is what we call *individuality*.

And let it be remembered that the expression of individuality in children is in no wise rebellion. There is a plan underlying their efforts at self-expression and it is only when we acknowledge the plan and work in unity with it, that we help them to develop. The great plan is progress.

It is better to try to understand nature than to blindly work against her. "The five-fingered leaf

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closely bound in the bud separates as it opens. The branches separate from the trunk as the tree grows. But this legitimate separation does not mean disconnection. The tree is as much one tree as if it grew in a strait-jacket. All growth must widen and diverge. If natural growth is checked, disease must follow. If allowed, health, beauty, and happiness accompany it," writes Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and how true it is!

When we bring ourselves to look upon this individual divergence of our children from ourselves as right, we are working in accord with nature, and so to work brings special happiness.

The child's being stretches out a hundred invisible hands trying to find out all that is solid and permanent in its environment. Like ivy creeping up the side of a wall, though we can not actually see the growth, day by day the miracle is worked, the eager hidden hands cling on to their natural line of advance, and, slowly toiling onward, gradually make their beautiful ascent.

To thwart the individual development of the child is quite the same as to break back the juicy tendrils of the vine in such a way that they can no longer advance in nature's way. Nature is not devious. Onward, upward is her simple motto, and there is no

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alternative but the gradual death which comes to every living thing once it has ceased to advance.

Deterioration or advance is the great plan of life. Morally, ground must be gained in character-building, or it is soon lost. Physically, the very instant progress is checked our powers begin to fail. Spiritually, unless we come to believe more, we perilously soon come to believe less.

The country must advance, the state, the city, the town, and in order that advance may be assured the individual must advance also. Parents, in the very nature of things, are pushed aside, for there is progress all along the line, new ways of doing old things, new thoughts about familiar subjects, new points of view, whole areas of entirely virgin effort and idea.

This progress shows strong and keen in all countries still on the upward move. Its base of operation is the individual. It works up from the individual through the home, the town, the city, to the nation, where, accumulating its forces, it makes a great leap onward toward the fulfilling of ultimate human destiny.

When the individual ceases to progress, the nation, sooner or later, comes to a standstill. After which the inevitable period of deterioration sets in.

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The very leaven of advance is individual power. To repress and misunderstand individuality as expressed in the child, is to hold back not only the individual but through him the family, the city, the state, the nation, the human race.

Individuality is that divine spark in the child upon which he builds his life, and by means of which he makes his advance. Individuality is creative, and has to do with his highest spiritual output.

Realizing this, watch eagerly for each child's individual bent. And do not, when found, immediately try to thwart it! Help him to follow his star. Nor does this mean fostering lawlessness and egotism.

Instead, the greater amount of individuality a child shows the greater his need for sane and intelligent restraint; for discipline along practical lines only helps in the burnishing of those higher things not made with hands, but often saved by hands from destruction.

I know a father who insisted that his daughter should become a horsewoman, and ridiculed and abused her musical talent until she became ashamed of her real bent. But no amount of compulsion ever made her a horsewoman. Misunderstanding and dissension were the only fruits of that mis-

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guided parent's desire to prevent divergence, and turn out a new pattern of himself.

A mother who was very fond of her own fireside could not tolerate in her only daughter a love of travel and interest in the life of the world. She wished to chain the girl's restless spirit to her own placid one, with the result that all chains were snapped, and the girl's best self was never recaptured by her loving but narrow and misdirected mother.

Such examples of repression of individuality are only too common, they could be multiplied indefinitely from observation in any one little corner of the world.

Emerson tells us to respect the child so much that we will not endure his misrepresentation of himself through folly and false development. We must not allow him to be a caricature of himself.

Those who love and study children will agree, I think, that this caricature is usually found to be the riot of individuality following no definite plan of development. To prevent this, to protect the child from himself, we must find out each hidden possibility for good that lurks within him. Yet it is not enough to find them out, they must be nurtured into usefulness and strength, for, like all valuable forces, individuality is a dangerous power

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if misused. The very fact that it is creative emphasizes both its value and its danger.

The child who shows individuality in talent or in general force of personality is a far more valuable child to the race than one less gifted. Such a child holds a potentiality within himself better for the nation than a heap of gold. We owe it to him and to our age to further his particular gifts.

But never forget that to make any creative force useful, it must be coupled with work. Talent without work is a poor thing; a travesty.

Therefore, our part as parents is not only to watch and wonder as our children light their individual tapers at the great world's heart, but to show them how to guard and use whatever they may have been allowed to win for themselves of the sacred fire.

As soon as the child's natural bent is discovered and his individual trend made plain, the mother's task lies clear ahead of her. She, better than any one else, can teach him the value of work, the relation work bears to results, the necessity for physical and moral effort in order that there may be spiritual crops.

Any talent, however humble, must receive its toll of consecrated hours if it is to amount to anything. Every lofty thought must be backed by actual experi-

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ence or it evaporates into nothing. The superficial weakens character.

To guide a child so that he does not make the false step of being satisfied with attractions and talents that are superficial he must come to know and love work. Work is not harsh and ugly, it is the path which leads us face to face with all our greatest joys. As wives we spend ourselves for our beloved; as mothers we work for our little ones; as artists in any field of endeavor, we give of ourselves that creative work may be the result. All the highest spiritual guerdons of life are the result of work. Individuality, like all energy, must be turned from waste to construction if it is to fulfil its purpose.

The child who "loves" one thing and "hates" another will gradually soften, but the individual force which prompts him to show decided preferences and express definite desires is the very means by which he will advance. It is, in fact, the first crude expression of the motive power of his life. Help him to construct by teaching him to value and understand work.

Ella Lyman Cabot says that "character grows mainly in two ways: through work well done and through the contagious example of people who we love and admire." "The contagious example" of friendship between a mother and her children is im-

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possible until the individuality of each child asserts itself. Then the way is open for it, and one of the most beautiful of human relationships may begin—*may*—for often the possible beauty is blurred by conflict, misunderstanding, and tactless opposition in little things which really matter not at all.

A mother who achieves friendship with her child is wise with the wisdom of the serpent, for it takes cunning to bridle a wild horse and one may run in opposition to it forever with no result, but once run beside it until the hand gradually finds the place of control, and the bridle is easily slipped on. To run with the child is the quickest way of getting him under the bridle. Once there he may soon be led to drag his allotment of burdens up the hill of difficulty. Friendship is the surest means to this end, as well as the sweetest.

I suppose many parents who have failed to turn their children out after an exact pattern chosen by themselves are keenly disappointed, even hurt, really feeling in the bottom of their hearts that their efforts, which were entirely disinteresting and only for the good of the child, were most unfairly received.

This is not true child-love, however. True child-love is the result of years of thought, study, and, if I may say it, of preparation for the high calling of parenthood. The primitive quality is self-love. The

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child in tribal life was an asset of parenthood, representing wealth, their labor and worth being minutely calculated.

Though we have happily grown far away from this idea in many respects, it still clings to us in just such little matters as this—we have not quite rooted out the tendency born of the servitude of ages to feel that we have a right of possession over our children.

With our spiritual advance we come nearer and nearer to a conception of what child-love really is. Discipline, not that “my word which altereth not may be obeyed,” but that the child may lose the faults which weigh his pinions down; control, not to coerce the child that a certain amount of daily labor may be exacted from him, but that through its beneficent agency his energies may be conserved for the better making of the next generation; education, not that the child may better serve his parents, but that he may have open roads secured to his soul for the insweep of all ennobling thought—thought unconsciously used by him afterward in the making of character.

This is child-love; selfless, glorified attribute of idealized parenthood. To reach it we must understand that the individual instincts of each child are planted in him by a hand higher than our own.

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While curbing, restraining, and guiding him along the uneven road of daily life, we must not lose sight of them, for they are his everlasting crown. To rob him of them is to send him into eternity shorn of his greatest glory.

While making his progress across the Bridge of Sighs the child is pretty sure to fall in with others who are on the same journey of self-discovery. It would be strange indeed were it otherwise. Yet to the mother one of the sharpest wounds she is destined to receive is this simple inevitable one of friendships made by her children outside of her control and without her consent or approval.

But unless she knows something positive against the self-elected friends of her growing children, is it not wisest to accept them? Their reign is usually short. To criticise and refuse them hospitality only serves to banish the children also, for a disputed friendship will often be clung to through perversity alone. A word here and there tactfully spoken in moments of sympathy will help the children in choosing their friends. Compulsion never yet proved successful in forming a friendship, and I very much doubt if it ever broke one.

The fancies and crudities of adolescent friendships are best allowed to take their course. When the boy is a man, the girl a woman, these morbid

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relationships assume their true proportions. In normal cases they do not do any harm; they are, one might almost say, pathologic, inasmuch as they are the result of an unripe mental and physical state. If they become a cause of dissension, abuse, and coldness between parents and children, then it is, and then only, that they begin to do real harm.

It is wise to ask here also, if self-love may not be at the bottom of many of our disappointments. Self-elected friends usually do not contribute much to the glorification of the child who selects them! They come in answer to a different call.

Is it really for the child's sake that we so deeply mourn his choice of friends, or is it because an abnormal self-love is touched where it is most sensitive? The child's glory reflects upon his parents; they bask in it, unfurl in it, reach out contented fingers of delight like grasses in a dark pool suddenly sun-touched. His background life detracts from them, and, along the same principles, they recoil, draw in their wounded antennæ of self-love, and sink down behind their rocks of natural defence, scolding the child because he has not gratified them.

The child, concrete and living output of all the hidden self of parenthood, stands before the world for judgment, and to have a price put upon it.

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Strange to relate, the world's judgment does not in the least hurt the child, for he goes on, unconscious that he has been judged, working out his life after a pattern invisible to every eye but his. But the world's judgment enters the parent's heart and rankles there. Do not make the mistake of thinking this is child-love—it is self-love.

If the mother really wants her little daughter's best development, the gradual unfolding of the stainless garments of girlhood until she, the woman, stands revealed; if the father is really bent upon a manhood of noble effort for his son, it is likely that both will have strength to see self-love and child-love in proper proportions one to another. They will not demand beauty, popularity, and distinction from children who are mere grubs! They may even attain to such a state of wisdom as will enable them to look askance upon the warm thrills of self-gratification which have their source in the child. They may even come to ask "and what of the child?"

Friends, life-partner, life-work, all gravitate toward the individual, as soon as his developing nature expresses their need. Parents must accept the friends, the work, the husband, or the wife chosen by their child. They can not decide what jewels

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are to be his. It is when they try to do this that the inevitable failure brings disappointments which could have been avoided by a calmer, saner handling of exactly the same events.

The only authority which amounts to anything when the children have once grown up is the authority we possess by right of having made something of ourselves. Wisdom and daily example—courage, gentleness, love—these qualities invest our very persons with authority, and we rule our children by its right, though we say not a single word.

It does no good to lock up grown boys and girls in order to keep them away from vice, or to forbid certain “undesirable” friends the hospitality of the home—this kind of authority is about as effective as efforts to stop a spring freshet with a dam of twigs. It is the other kind of authority which is the only real restraint, and in homes where it is exerted there are very few of the disappointments which shatter love and separate mother and child forever. For, with the patience of motherhood, we must never let ourselves forget that the paths which *seem* to separate at the gate-way of the Bridge of Sighs do not in reality do so; instead, they find themselves strangely united at the other end, locked together, safely, lovingly, and for all time, if only for that short space there can be maintained a gentle peace.

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But what must we *do?* I fancy an anxious mother may ask. With the exception of forbidding in a quiet and dignified manner recreations or friendships that are dangerous, the less said and done the better. The pioneer work of discipline and influence must have been done in the nursery, and ahead, on the other side of the Bridge of Sighs, are years and years of happy companionship for all.

Unfortunately there is sure to be a space, if the child is to amount to anything, when he will be a thorn in his mother's flesh, and do not let us forget that he is intolerable to himself also. The less said by the parents, the less done, the better. Heated and unkind words entangle mother and child in complications a lifetime is not long enough to undo.

Once the child is conscious of his own personality it is dangerous to put on the brakes, or to try to crowd and cramp his new instincts by surrounding them in a mesh of futile restrictions which he will only ignore without a second thought. Therefore, the less said and done, the better. The parents must step aside for a short time, and allow the young life to spread and blossom where it will.

The only sure hold they have, and it is stronger than grapplings of steel, is the influence of example, the protection of a loving home, the principles of honor, obedience, and self-control deep-rooted in

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childhood, and the heredity instincts for good which are the child's guardian angels all his life. With these in his favor, his sojourn on the Bridge of Sighs, even with its many revelations, will do no harm, rather will it do him good. If he has poor home influences and evil hereditary instincts, the wringing of innumerable hands will not avail—at least in the majority of cases, for his doom will have been sealed before his birth.

## XIII

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"What the father and mother will have to do is to regulate their whole lives so that the indirect, the unconscious, instruction which the child will absorb from them—and which, in any case, means most for his future—will make for his moral betterment. Always they must bear firmly in mind that, as wise old Witte used to say, 'teaching begins, but example accomplishes.'"

—H. ADDINGTON BRUCE.

IT IS what *we are* that influences our children; not what we tell them they must be.

There is a time in the life of every healthy child when he tries to escape home influence and to show his independence. Can what we are avail then, you suggest, when every effort he makes is to pull directly against us? I believe that it can.

All through the wayward stage the child is being saturated with what his parents really are, particularly with what his mother really is. Impressionable, imitative, wax to the influence of a stronger mind, the child receives through all his wilfulness the ineradicable dye of his mother's influence. He is saturated with her ideals, her character, her point

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of view, her ambition, in fact "herself" in all its inwardness.

This is one of the mysteries surrounding mother and child. All the while that the child fancies himself most independent, he is unconsciously, but nevertheless surely, receiving drop by drop into his soul, the lessons taught him by his mother's daily life.

When the tension of adolescence changes, as change it must, the child awakens to the realization that in some strange way he has swung round and is viewing life much as his parents view it, that his vaunted independence was only a condition of youth, quite transitory, an attitude soon lost when he found himself face to face with life.

Now it is that the ideals nurtured unconsciously in childhood, and dormant during the period of rebellion, arise full-fledged and assert their influence, for even in the darkness of rebellion and misunderstanding he has made them his.

There is only one way to give the child this silent help while he is apparently pulling hard in the other direction. It is necessary to *be*.

Example is the school at which the child learns all the vital lessons of his life. Years of book-learning amount to nothing against a single trait inculcated from babyhood by means of imitation. Give the child's genius for imitation a good example

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to draw upon and his character is made. It is difficult to find a better, quicker or more enduring way to impart those lessons upon which development depends. Instruction without example counts for very little. Example, with no other instruction, is sufficient to form character.

But perhaps it is somewhat trite to talk of example to parents. "We are as good as other people —better than some," they say, which is no doubt quite true.

But when it comes to training the spiritual and mental output of an intelligent child something more definite is demanded for success than that parents shall be vaguely good after a pattern or standard prevalent among their neighbors. They must have their individual lamps trimmed, for what they hand out as example is distinctly a personal and inexchangeable coin.

Parents do not need to be perfect to have their example count. On the contrary, the strength that never knows weakness is a too inhuman attribute. Perfection without a flaw is cold, and through its very coldness fails to stimulate.

It is the striving by parents to make come true in their own lives the ideals and perfections of character seen in their spiritual eye which influences. It is that the parents believe earnestly in something

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higher, and are searching after it, that gives true force to example. That the high things of life are *real* to the parents communicates itself mysteriously to the child. Though not a word is spoken, the influence is felt—stronger for the very silence which bears it aloft as a star, and from the spiritual realities which the parents have made their own does the child construct that which shall be vital and enduring within himself.

"My mother used to read a few prayers to us every morning till we all left home. I never once saw her do it that her voice did not tremble and her eyes fill with tears, so great was her desire that we would grow up into noble men and women. That influence has meant more to me than anything else in my life," said a gray-haired man when urged to speak of his youth. And a woman of great strength of character once told me that nothing had terrified her in her whole childhood so much as did the fire in her father's eye at the mere thought of the possibility of having been told an untruth. From that instance, she says, she "comprehended" truth, as it were, and an unspoken something in her father's face made it possible for her, during a long and eventful life, never to stray from the light of that sudden revelation.

The power of the examples here described lay

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not in the fact that a certain father desired his children to speak the truth, or that a certain mother read daily prayers, but in the fact that the parents spoken of *were something* in themselves. The longings of the mother which prompted her to pray, the truthfulness of the father which made a lie abhorrent to him, it is in these that the power to influence lay.

Every child should feel, though a thousand proofs to the contrary were offered, that his mother and father represent in their own persons perfect truth of word and deed toward all men.

For the keen judgment of a child to rest satisfied in this faith proves that in the thousand little things which crop up for daily discussion and decision, the parents have given their unfailing allegiance to the right. They have had a high code of honor and have unfolded it gradually before their children. They are not perfect, but are striving after perfection. Not ideal, but having ideals constantly before them in the daily working out of their lives. Their great strength lies in the fact that they are careful of little things.

The most productive line of influence over growing children is therefore to really be that which you wish them to become. Nothing else will ever take the place of this particular kind of influence. No ready-made examples, no purchased advantages, no

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amount of talk will ever do for them what it will do.

Another line of influence is the intellectual. Try to follow the individual instincts of each growing child. It has been said, perhaps somewhat irreverently, that now "mother's table-talk is more important than her doughnuts!" Be that as it may, it is necessary to grow with our children.

The world has a little way of going on however we may wish to hold to the old way of doing things. Every year there are new thoughts to accept, new books to read, new subjects to try to understand, new ways of doing old things. The mother who uses her intelligence to keep up with the world is the mother who will retain her influence.

To guide and direct growing children it is necessary to see life from their standpoint, and when mothers find themselves pushed aside it is usually because they have first been willing to stand still.

Where ridicule and conflict exist at home instead of intelligent sympathy the children soon feel their allegiance swerve, for loudest of all cries in the heart of the growing boy or girl is the cry for understanding, and as unerring in their instinct as the magnetic needle, they go swiftly where they will be satisfied. Once gone they are hard to win back. Therefore it is only being provident of the future for the mother to secure the line of influence

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which I have called the intellectual as soon as possible and at whatever cost.

Even if she is not very clever, the mother who loves her child in the highest way soon grows to see through his eyes, and to love what he loves. It is not hard, if she begins in time, to give him sympathy and the stimulant of approbation, and she need not discourage or wound him even if she does not always see the end of his efforts in full view. Mothers need faith every hour in the day.

Then there is the home, or the material line of influence. It is so easy to forget how much surroundings mean to the growing child.

Mrs. Deland shows us in the character of Blair in "The Iron Woman" how a child may be discouraged and thrown back upon himself by the failure of the home to minister to his highest needs.

A sensitive, highly-organized child may be greatly shocked by home surroundings which perfectly satisfy his parents. The spirit of "what's good enough for me is good enough for my children" has been the ruin of many a home.

In this land of quick fortunes, sudden social upheavals, and abrupt changes in family circumstance, it does not do to settle down into any fixed form of thought. The mother must hold herself ready to progress instantly if she is given the chance.

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Into the material making of the home the mother's very best must go. Often little things hold back a whole family's spiritual advance.

For instance, the cold, gloomy, unlived-in parlor! Abolish it, and instead create a living-room with reading lamps, easy chairs, and book-shelves. Make this room bright and cheerful and welcome the children's friends there at all times. I often wonder where the family congregate in many homes where there is no general room. Kitchen and doorstep are poor substitutes for the comforts of a common room open to the interests, games, and occupations of each member of the family.

The material line of influence is particularly important when we want to reach boys, for boys are as easily drawn by the comforts of home as they are driven off by its inability to cheer and satisfy. To forbid older boys to smoke at home, to refuse to welcome their friends, to be over-particular and exacting in matters of neatness only drive them hopelessly away.

Never make it easy for a boy to leave home. On the contrary, use all your ingenuity to make the boys of the family feel that they are important to the home, always wanted, always necessary to their mother's happiness and always looked upon by her as her main prop and help in every event of family life.

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There is another line of influence, I scarcely know what to call it—it has to do with the rights of personality. The growing child must have his rights considered. Too often he is made to do uncongenial tasks that would not be exacted of his older brothers and sisters, given no place of his own, sometimes not even his own bed. His toys, books, and little inventions are not respected by others, and he is made use of at every turn without a serious thought being given to his personal life, because—and here is the point—because he is only a child. Yet is he *only* a child? Is there not something more in him than the vague, indefinite outlines of childhood? I think there is, and I feel sure that it is this element in him which his parents too often discount.

By the very discounting of this early demand of his nature for individual recognition they fail to gather into their hands one of the strongest of all lines of influence as he grows older, namely, his ardor to please and obey those who have made it easy for him to become himself.

While helping him to guard his personal rights and secure space in the family for development, the parents, through sympathy, come for the first time to really know their child. The wondrous spirit “self,” shy as a bird and as easily hurt, they find must be wooed with unutterable patience. But to

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try for its capture, they also find it well worth while.

It pays to take children seriously. Children respond instantly to those who reverence the first faint stirrings of the selfhood within them, and who help them in their first efforts to make toward the light of individual life.

It is always disturbing to see unexpected characteristics cropping up in one's children, and there are sure to be moments of keen disappointment to every parent in the development of every child, but because your children do not develop along your own particular lines they are not necessarily failures.

Realize that the child is not all you, nor yet is he all his father. The instincts of a double line of ancestry clamor in him for recognition. Centuries of men and women have left him the legacy of their hopes and fears, their virtues and their vices. You must take him as you find him—not with the desire to make him over into some type you particularly admire, but with the solemn realization that your part is to help him find himself, and to assist him in following the highest instincts with which he has been endowed.

To clear away the hindrances in his path is often more important than any other line of endeavor. You may find that you can influence most while talking least, and may come to realize that often the most

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harmful thing a mother can possibly do is to put her personality in opposition to her child's. I can only say again and again "sympathy, sympathy."

In the few crises when it is impossible to feel sympathy, then silence, lest you lose forever that mysterious something, that spiritual nearness which is the very core and heart of influence. But behind and through the sympathy and still behind and through the silence must be felt the magnetic strength of will and character that is the foundation of all real power. To have this strength, you must *be*.

## XIV

### HOME AND THE CHILD

“ When all is still within these walls,  
And Thy sweet sleep through darkness falls  
On little hearts that trust in me,  
However bitter toil may be,  
For length of days, O Lord! on Thee  
My spirit calls.

“ Their daily need by day entrails  
My hand and brain, but when night falls  
And leaves the questioning spirit free  
To brood upon the days to be,  
For time and strength, O Lord! on Thee  
My spirit calls.”

—T. A. DALY, in *The Evening Bulletin* of Philadelphia.

I HAVE in my mind, as I begin to write, the picture of an old lady of seventy-eight, sitting all day long by a certain sunny window, her keen eyes looking out from under the white folds of her cap, still eager to meet the ever-new and ever-wonderful problems of the world.

This picture embodies for me the true meaning of what it is to be the head of the home. Until her death, the home which this mother's influence

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dominated was the spiritual as well as the physical home of the five children who grew to manhood and womanhood within it.

Even as they departed on their several marriage days, its hold was such that they returned with every care and burden to learn how to bear or solve it beside that parent who had guided their first steps. Not a decision was made that had not first been laid at her feet; not an important step taken until she had first been eagerly consulted.

Often, when her opinion was asked upon a particularly grave subject, she would smile and shake her head, but the next day would come a letter, the result of a night of careful thought, and the judgment expressed in it so logically, prudently, and lovingly, was inevitably felt to be correct.

Death failed to destroy the power of the home of which I speak, for the children—now gray-haired men and women—still ask when anxious or perplexed, “What would mother have said?”

The ideal function of the home is to provide for the children who are growing up within it, as well as for those who have already reached manhood and womanhood, a place always a little ahead of them in the race, a place beyond, toward which they can turn for sympathy, understanding, encouragement and incentive to do their best.

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Why should nine homes out of ten fail utterly to supply this incentive? Why, instead, must we so often witness one of life's saddest sights, the departure of children from the home as soon as they are able to contribute something to it?

Two answers may be given to this question. Much lies in the children, of course, for each generation has the world-old longing for experience, and is animated by the same burning desire for self-expression and action not bounded by the high and narrow walls of home. That the walls of the home *are* high and narrow (not broad, generous and inviting), is the second reason, and they are built by the parents' hands.

The parents, in the nine homes out of ten, have neglected to prepare themselves with an equipment that will attract and hold their developing children. Instead of leading and encouraging, they plant themselves in opposition to the natural progress of the age as manifested in their children. Their endeavor is to hold back rather than to encourage, and, impatient of restraint, the children break away and the parents find themselves alone.

The natural result of a happy marriage is narrowness.

Too often marriage puts an absolute end to the mental life of the wife, and the strength of

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the young husband is turned at a sharp angle from pursuits of an intellectual nature, into the treadmill of business. Business at all sacrifices, for it produces money, and without money the little family must perish. And it is a fear not to be despised which prompts and goads the energies of the father—the fear that the wolf may not be kept at bay from the home for which he holds himself responsible.

Granting and fully appreciating this fear, let him look for one moment on the reverse of the picture. The father has a great responsibility to his children as they grow older, and it is not only that they may be fed and clothed. He is their natural adviser, he should be their friend, companion, and counsellor, as well as bank, and how can he be these things unless he has taken time for self-improvement, as well as money-making?

Let us think of the child's life in relation to the home. First, babyhood: The principal function of the home in babyhood is to provide a scaffolding for the rising walls of manhood. The tiny morsel of humanity must be allowed to develop his body, the practical aspects of the home come first.

But a subtle change begins to work with the child's educational years. These we roughly call ten, eight to eighteen, and during

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the function of the home finds itself altogether changed.

No longer does the careful diet, the screened windows, the regulated atmosphere, the imposed "hush" play their once important rôles. A narrow bed, a cold room, anything to eat; it matters not now. The child's soul is beginning to grow, and in the new fascinations of self-discovery, creature comforts are forgotten altogether.

Does the home provide him with the confidence, sympathy, and encouragement he needs to reach his true proportions in this second period? If so, it has fulfilled its destiny, but the miracle can not be worked except at the hands of the parents. Four walls and a roof, however beautiful, can never be made into a true home for the mind of a growing child unless they are lit from within. Personality, culture, dignity, understanding, and quiet, peaceful sympathy at the parents' hands, these are needed more than "ceiled with cedar and painted with vermillion," and these, when exhibited in a home, give it the magnet-quality, from which those once under its influence never escape.

Then there is a third period which includes the child's life from his last day at school until he leaves the home. In these days of late marriages, and long preparations for professional careers, it is possible

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that ten more years may be added before this end is reached. It is now that the foundations of the home tremble. It is now, if the tragedy is to happen, that father and mother are made back numbers, no longer consulted even as a matter of form. The home still provides a shelter for the bodies of the children, but its control over their minds is gone forever. They are now men and women with pronounced individualities, amusements, ambitions, and friends they do not share. The parents are sometimes rudely, sometimes gently, but always quite surely, pushed out of all that is vital in their lives. Parents who succeed admirably in the first part of their children's lives may fail utterly in the second and third.

Yet the solution of the problem lies in the parents' hands. Children can not be compelled to love home. Love of home is the fruit of a tree, the roots of which grow deep in the parents' hearts. The mother and father must have something to give, and having it, rest assured the children will not need to be told twice to ask.

The appetite of the developing mind is ravenous. If it once discovers that it can turn to its parents for food, how gladly, how sweetly, how naturally will it so turn!

For this reason it is unwise for parents to allow themselves to sink too much into the background

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of life. It is better to make a struggle to maintain in the world whatever influence and position they may have. To be in the world, not of it, is to keep advice and judgment in condition to be of use.

This can only be accomplished by giving time to self-development and thought of self-culture. If this seems hard, tedious, or not worth while, remember the words of Phillips Brooks: "He who helps a child helps humanity with a distinctness, with an immediateness, which no other help given to human creatures in any other stage of their human life can possibly give again."

Every human being, even the smallest child, longs for self-expression, and it is in the home that he should find it.

In certain environments we unfold, the tight, puzzled places in our natures uncurl, and we bask and open and grow toward the light.

In other environments we shrink back; a bolt is shot to somewhere in us and we are first silent, then taciturn and morose.

The ideal home invites self-expression, the home which is really not a home but a shelter discourages and destroys it.

Just what do we mean by self-expression? We mean the working out of personal development, the gradual coming to one's own, as it were, the finding

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of one's self little by little, and the slow gaining and building of character. Also we mean the following to achievement of any talent or special natural gift.

The best thing that can happen to a child is to find himself growing up in an environment in which he can do these things naturally, in the light of day. The worst thing that can happen to him is to be forced through lack of sympathy to follow his star furtively, covertly, fearfully, and alone.

I know a child who once longed to become an artist. He drew pictures on every piece of waste paper that was thrown from his mother's desk. But his parents had great fun in holding up his efforts to ridicule, and his brothers and sisters enjoyed nothing so much as a laugh at his expense. Hurt in his most sensitive part, which was his desire to express himself through art, the child clung passionately to his gift but proceeded to develop it in secret. Ingratiating himself with his drawing-master, he soon became a favorite pupil and had frequent lessons out of school. At an early age this boy left home to follow his talent out in the world, where eventually he won the recognition refused him in his own home.

A home that turns its gifted children out into the

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world is a failure. It is made a failure by the parents through ignorance, selfishness, and lack of sympathy. The picture of little Handel playing his beloved spinet in his night clothes for fear of the sarcasm of his parents illustrates this thought.

The simple home is the best home. Money can buy many things, but it is valueless where the essentials of moral life are concerned. It can not for one little instant buy the atmosphere which pervades the ideal home. That is a thing which is paid for from a moral bank, and the bank is in the hands of the parents; its coin is not interchangeable. It is the fruit of their lives, an indescribable quality which is felt instantly by every stranger who comes under their roof. We call this the *tone* of the home. It is the *self-expression* of the parents.

One of the values of poverty is that it causes us to concentrate our powers upon a few things. Many a vast house remains a house all its days instead of becoming a home, for the sole reason that there is too much of it for any one person or one family to vitalize.

It is not easy to make every article in one's home personal. Yet this lies before the mother as the only means of vitalizing her possessions so that the inanimate mysteriously becomes animate, dead timber and stones alive, inner furnishings exhaling,

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though worn and threadbare, the very essence of personality.

How is this done? Through time, thought, companionship, and the sweet gift of daily love. It is dangerous to let things in the aggregate add up to a total anywhere near the total of inner wealth. To know when to stop is an art we Americans seldom master. As a clever writer has recently said, "We must give quality to our belongings instead of demanding belongings which we hope will give quality to us."

It is better to concentrate upon a few things—thus eternally deepening their worth, than to spread one's self thin over many things, denying both to them and to ourselves the lasting attributes which are born of love and daily, hourly intercourse.

To quote from a recent article by Miss Cromer, which appeared in the *North American*: "I never doubted from the time I consciously began to care for old furniture, old rugs, old china—all the beautiful cast-offs of vanished lives—that a vast part of their charm was atmosphere, was something imparted to them by the affection of those forgotten ones and now inhering, for the perceptive vision, in their very substance. The craftsman of those elder days is not the only creator of the beauty that has come down to us. Whoever has loved another's work

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has thereby added something to it. I, in my turn, ought to be beautifying my belongings for those who come after me."

Does not this thought make a very powerful appeal to any of us who are in the act of home-building? Some rooms seem to speak out a welcome as we enter; some houses seem almost to beckon as one passes by. They have received their gift through love and because of love.

We can all do this with our homes, and oh! it means so much to the children; for, if the parents are cultured, the home shows their culture; if they are kindly, charitable, open-hearted, it at once takes on a subtle atmosphere of cheer. If they are honorable and honest, immediately the home catches their tone and bravely plays its accompanying wholesome note. The chord of that note is made of the varying but harmonious tones of each child who is coming to maturity under its roof. And if the parents truly love one another, mysteriously and wonderfully their love emphasizes, colors, and directs the whole.

I can not imagine any check more fatal to the natural development of a child than to surprise his father and mother in the act of quarrelling. What can the little nature do but shrink back, lose confidence in the blue of heaven, and begin the painful process of inward growth?

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The green shoots of character as they appear above the even fruitful soil of babyhood are very tender. Surprised by a cold look or broken by a harsh and unexpected word they become perverted; they cease to grow toward the light; they die.

The home, to be ideal, must draw the child onward and outward. There is nothing like the warmth of true love to do this; not capricious love which pays for a season of neglect by a wax doll or a box of candy, but faithful, thoughtful, continuous sympathy—real interest in everything that interests the child, unfeigned delight in his delights, readiness to explain each wonderful mystery of life as soon as the eager advance of the young soul demands knowledge, sympathy, and allegiance. This is what the child asks—that his parents may be his allies in his fight for individual life and help him to discover the enchanted continent of self with all its wonders.

A simple home, therefore, a cultured home, a home where peace and charity prevail, is best; and ruling it, parents whose love for each other is the great key to all difficulty, an ever-present romance which gilds the dullest day and teaches a noble lesson by its existence alone.

This is the home which provides an ideal atmosphere for the highest development of children. In it they express themselves; through its kindly win-

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dows they first make friends with the unknown world outside, and when they eventually go out to seek their fortunes, the ideals inspired by that home remain a moral and spiritual shelter forever.

And what of taste in the home? Taste is a special gift, dropped by a good fairy into the hand of the child in his cradle; it cannot be bought. Money judiciously spent by discreet parents may trim and furbelow the child, but it can not buy for him an eye that sees harmoniously or the innate sense which makes him feel instinctively what things are good and shrink back almost with a sense of physical illness when he is surrounded by confusion and crude colors.

Some of the costliest houses are filled with grotesque unrelated pieces of furniture and yet a simple youth may be born with the instinctive power to know just what curve in the leg of a chair makes it a veritable "find," and just what slender slant to the back of an old bench assures us that it is the "real thing."

Though taste may be a fairy's gift, parents can help their children to acquire a pretty creditable imitation of the sense if nature has denied it.

Do parents think enough of their duty—or may I say their privilege—in this direction? I believe not, for in the usual modern family it is rare indeed to

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find one thought given to the true cultivation of the eye—to the development of what we call taste.

Yet rich or poor, no quality will stand the child in better stead when he comes to the elective age.

To prepare him for the age of individual selection, begin in babyhood to surround him only with harmonious and carefully-chosen things. Simplicity is the secret of true art, and simplicity, you know, may be as expensive as one will.

No bric-a-brac, no bargain pictures, no tawdry, cheap furniture, no "imitation" anything. These destroy in the receptive mind of the little child the very quality one is endeavoring to cultivate—sense of proportion and intuitive response to the beautiful.

Let us be practical for a moment and go into detail. Choose for the nursery a pale pink or simple white and have nothing in the room that can not be kept freshly washed and ironed. Emphasize this delicate background by a chest or two of dull mahogany, a polished brass candlestick, or a chair of plaited rush.

Down stairs do away with all crude colors, for the first step toward the cultivation of taste is to train the eye in this neglected direction. There are too many raw colors in most of our homes. No wonder the children grow up to desire scarlet libra-

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ries, pea-green velvet parlor suites, and canary boudoirs!

Take the soft nondescript color of autumn leaves for the living-room. Brighten this with a few good pieces of furniture, the friendly faces of a number of *real* pictures, and if possible a good rug. There is no place in the simple home for satins, damasks, and velvets. Upholstered furniture is expensive and unless very good it is not desirable.

Never let your child see a number of unrelated so-called "ornaments" on the mantle-shelves and tables. A good clock, a vase or two if they are of fine glass or interesting pottery, or a pair of plain, well-formed candlesticks—these are enough.

Abolish the draped piano, the tea table, the scarfs, tidies, and unused company cushions. Table-cloths are as obsolete as the mastodon and the center-table in the living-room should have nothing but a small round mat of painted leather under the lamp—a practical double-burner with sensible dark-green shades around which the family can gather every evening, and on it a few good books—nothing else.

Do not choose carpets, curtains, and wall-paper of pronounced patterns. Plain colors, or a figure almost nondescript, have taken their place. No formal lace curtains are found in the successful home of to-day. Soft mull curtains the windows, or bright

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chintz—or often they are left quite bare with cheerful flowers and plenty of space for light and air.

In the dining-room be particularly careful of each appointment. Do not let your child's eyes become used to cheap lace, imitation silver, incongruous china. Choose one color—delft blue is good, and replenish your china always in this shade. At last, at no extra expense to yourself, you will find that each unrelated piece of necessary china is uniform in shade, and that your table is always dainty.

I do not mean to set up impossible ideals for simple people; on the contrary, only to beg for more consideration in the training of taste in children. Good pictures are as cheap as bad, good furniture far cheaper in the end; and it is more economical to eliminate dust-gathering ornaments and substitute a good piece of brass or a bowl of pottery that will last a lifetime, than to "decorate" (hateful word!), from the bargain sales or catalogues of department stores.

To furnish the home on a foundation color which will act as a basis for each new purchase is cheap when compared to the "doing over" and keeping up of each room in a different style and color, and better, far better in the end.

Let me plead for good furniture! If you can not do it all at once, resolve that at least you will

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buy one solid piece of seasoned mahogany every year!

Never buy at an August sale! never *expect* to get a bargain. Look to the future of your home and place in it the handicraft of the masters of old. Their art, impossible to cheaply imitate, though it can be carefully copied, is the emblem of true culture, and those who love it and who have been brought up under its shadow are unable in a lifetime to pay their debt of gratitude.

What I would like to see abolished from the home are the useless, the ornate, the crude, substituting the useful, the harmonious. And why?

Can you not see what it means to the child to be surrounded by lamps that do not give light, teapots that do not pour tea, cushions that were never designed to give rest, vases that are not meant to hold flowers, clocks that do not keep time, chairs that are to be looked at, not sat upon, and colors not combined after nature's harmonious scheme, but after man's often only half-developed sense?

Such surroundings have the same effect upon the tender instinctive movements toward taste in a child that a spadeful of stones would have if thrown upon a seedling! They annihilate it without hope of resurrection.

I would have the child brought up to *live* in his

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home. I would have nothing in it the beauty of which has not, as the first reason for its existence, a foundation of true usefulness. I would have his baby eyes open upon the tender faces of the world's immortal madonnas looking down at him from the nursery walls, I would have him climb up for the first time beside the gentle curves of the sweet old chairs and tables of the past, redolent of their own peculiar "smack of age, and relish of the saltiness of time." I would have him acquire his truest culture right in the heart of his own home, and go out from it with a taste so surely formed, so absolutely grounded in the essentials of shape and color, that it would be impossible for him to make an error in choosing his own surroundings or to be contented amid any less satisfying to his higher self than these provided for him by the culture and judgment of his parents.

## XV

### HOW MUCH SHALL WE TELL THE CHILDREN?

"Chastity is a tower. Deep down in the soul must be placed foundations for the support. Such foundations are self-control, self-sacrifice, obedience to conscience and external authority, modesty, love of purity, respect for self and others, high reverence for motherhood, and all the traits which combine to make a sweet, noble, strong character. Elemental character-training is the first important step toward purity. Sex-instruction will not give character. —FATHER TIERNEY.

We mothers to be truly effective must not only know what we believe, but why. Autocracies even in family life are out of date, and the little citizens of the home are quick with their "why, mother?" when an opinion is offered. Tell them the "why." By such questions and answers does the child grow, and from them he builds up his inner vision of life.

But what of the inconvenient questions children ask? It is such a temptation to turn these off with a laugh! Is there ever a time when evasion and prevarication are right? Or does the simple asking impose upon us, as mothers, the duty of a truthful, and only a truthful, answer?

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I can not help feeling that it does. That it is the duty of the mother to feed out to her child the knowledge he craves, using her best discretion in the choice of opportunity, and telling him what he wishes to know in a spirit of the deepest reverence.

If the mother is willing to accept this duty she will sooner or later be confronted with the question harder than any other for her to answer, that question which lurks in the background of every intelligent child's mind: "Mother, where did I come from; did you find me in the garden or did the doctor bring me; how did I come?"

Difficult as this question is, it is a blessed opportunity. That the child should speak to us about such things, that he should ask these innocent questions is a sure indication that the time is ripe, that we may safely open wide our arms and satisfy the eager little heart beating against our own, with as much as it can absorb of the great and solemn history of the origin of life.

The trend of modern pedagogy seems to be leading us toward the belief that it is best for the child to receive this kind of knowledge from his mother.

The pendulum which a few years ago swung so very far toward the side of disclosure is even now making its way back toward moderation. Many educators are even against sex-hygiene being taught

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in schools, and radically against a too illuminating public discussion of vice. But I think all students of child-life agree that some knowledge of sex-development and sex-dangers must be given to children and that, whenever possible, it is the mother, she who knows and loves and understands her child, who is the one best fitted to give it.

Father Tierney, the well-known Catholic educator, has expressed a feeling that public sex-instruction may take away modesty and reserve, two of the great protections of childhood. "Modesty and shame," he says in a recent lecture, "are natural protectors of chastity. But the public and frequent discussion of sex details will destroy both. Familiarity will breed carelessness. The lesson of the class will become the topic of conversation. Reserve will go. Shame will disappear. Sin will follow. Thus your good intentions will be frustrated.

This, it seems to me, is very true. Sex-instruction will not give character, and to stand straight in a naughty and crooked world is an achievement of character and of the will. This is the kind of strength we want for our children and unless they have it, our instruction, however carefully given, will do them little good.

How ideal it would be if children did not have to know, if questions were not asked, if there could

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be a hedge so high that the sweet girl and the sturdy boy would be shielded from the bitter-sweet of knowledge until full-grown and able to bear the burden and responsibilities of life! I think every one admits that innocence, could it be but maintained, were best of all.

Yet we soon realize that this is not possible. As we read the latest books, see modern drama and hear up-to-date lectures, we realize that there is no longer any veil before the mysteries. Strange as it may seem to some of us who pride ourselves on being "old-fashioned," everything is open for all who run to read. We can no more keep children from knowing things than we can keep bees out of a rose garden. Instinct guides the bees to the flowers they need; so the child is led. He will get his knowledge somewhere; instinct will tell him how and where, we can not hold him back. Is it not a mistake to turn away his early questions, thus forcing him to gain his satisfaction outside the home?

It seems to be the mother's acknowledged task to answer and the mother's duty, however hard, to fill the empty, searching heart with knowledge. Though she need not volunteer information, or jog the sleeping instincts into life, once awake, once asking to be taught, it seems that she must face the

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difficulty and tell as little as possible, as truthfully, earnestly, and spiritually as she can.

In Helen Keller's "Story of My Life" there is a very interesting letter. When Helen was about eight years old Miss Sullivan, her teacher, writes of her thus: "I do wish things would stop being born! New puppies, new calves, and new babies keep Helen's interest in the why and wherefore of things at white heat. From the beginning I have made it a practice to answer all Helen's questions to the best of my ability, in a way intelligible to her, and at the same time truthfully. 'Why should I treat these questions differently?' I asked myself. I took Helen and my Botany, 'How Plants Grow,' up a tree where we often go to read or study, and I told her in simple words the story of plant life. I explained how the earth keeps the seed warm and moist until the little leaves are strong enough to push themselves out into the light and air. I drew an analogy between plant and animal life, and told her that seeds are eggs as truly as hens' eggs or birds' eggs; that the mother hen keeps her eggs warm and dry until the little chicks come out. I made her understand that all life comes from an egg. I told her that she could call the egg the cradle of life. Then I told her that other animals like the dog and the cow, and human beings, do not lay their eggs,

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but nourish their young in their own bodies—the function of sex I passed over as lightly as possible. I did, however, try to give her the idea that love is the great continuer of life. The subject was difficult, and my knowledge inadequate, but I am glad I did not shirk my responsibility; for stumbling, hesitating, and incomplete as my explanation was, it touched deep responsive chords in the soul of my little pupil, and the readiness with which she comprehended the great facts of physical life confirmed me in the opinion that the child has dormant within him when he comes into the world all the experiences of the race."

If the story of the origin of life told thus sympathetically to a poor little girl shut apart in a unique and terrible darkness struck "deep responsive chords" in her nature, what can we not hope from the normal child, blessed, alert, energized through a dozen different life-giving channels, what can we not hope as a result of giving him sympathetically and seriously the undistorted story of life, life after God's holy ordinance, as He planned that it should be carried on, told with the reverence of the finite for the will of the Infinite?

Stanley Hall in his "Aspect of Child Life and Education" has made a number of interesting studies on the subject of curiosity as manifested in the child. Over half the questions asked by children

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under ten he finds are upon topics relating to nature and the working of natural forces. Particularly do children from five to eight ask questions concerning the origin of life, and their questions are frank, natural and simple. That almost no questions upon this subject after the children have reached the age of ten are reported, seems to him significant, pointing to the fact that already such children have obtained the desired knowledge in some way or another and that often the "way in which such knowledge has come is bitterly regretted because the beauty and sacredness which should belong to all thoughts connected with the coming of new life has for them been sullied and this is felt as a loss and injury which no later teaching can ever fully repair."

Just how much we should tell about the origin of life is so very serious a question and a so much disputed one that the opinion of such a man as Stanley Hall must carry great weight, and I think will help us each one to decide where really lies our duty in this great and far-reaching question:

"Why, on this subject, on which the child most needs wise and adequate teachings, should he be left to acquire information in stealthy fashion from those totally unprepared to gratify his legitimate and natural curiosity in healthful ways? Too often the information comes from newspaper reports of crim-

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inal cases, which are read and discussed by children in the fourth and fifth grades of school. Could parents realize what it may mean to a child to have his first knowledge of the origin of life associated with sin, shame, and secrecy they would be guarded against it as from deadly poison. One wise and beautiful mother of my acquaintance, whose example is worthy of universal imitation, adopted the principle of answering truthfully, and to the measure of the child's understanding, all spontaneous questions. In a family of five children, each child has known of the coming of the younger ones, and has been allowed to see the dainty garments prepared for the tiny baby who was coming to be a part of the home. To the children of that household no false or wrong impressions have ever come. They are safeguarded from evil. To them the coming of new life is surrounded as it should be with a sacredness and responsibility born of a pure and wisely-given knowledge. In pitiful contrast to this is the stealthily-acquired, half-comprehended, and wholly false-in-feeling knowledge of the majority of children in our public schools. Teachers furnish overwhelming evidence that there are few children over eight years old in the public schools who have not some sort of knowledge of the origin of life, and it is perhaps commentary on the kind of knowledge to add

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that the children regard the subject as something secret and shameful. Unquestionably the home is the place for this kind of instruction, but unfortunately there are too many fathers and mothers who are either unwilling or unfitted to give it."

Every mother is sooner or later forced to make a decision in regard to this matter. One way or another the time will surely come when she must decide. In order that she may not make a blunder she will have to summon all her wit and instinct. No outsider can settle the really vital questions of one's inner life with one's children. Every mother must make a separate study of the conditions as she sees them in her own home and then decide what course is best for her to pursue. No two families present the same difficulties, no two are blest in quite the same degree.

So, in these closing thoughts, let me only commend one thing: give this solemn, rather awful question your very deepest consideration. Make a plan, and then follow it as carefully as you can. And remember this, the way in which a child gains his first knowledge of the mysteries of his origin are likely to color his entire life. Is it not better to plant with your own hand, trembling and faulty though it may be, rather than to leave the fallow, eager ground open to whoever may pass by in the night scattering the evil and undying seed?

## XVI

### CHAPERONAGE

"I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from evil."

—St. JOHN 17, 15th verse.

"It is the most hateful thing! My mother will not let me go anywhere without some older person tagging along. I can't have any fun at all!"

"It is just the same with me. Whenever I ask to do anything I always hear the same tiresome question, 'What older people are going, too?'"

This conversation, overheard one day in a street car, set me to thinking, and made me ask: do girls understand *why* their mothers wish to have them chaperoned? Can they think that it is because of some wilful desire to interfere and spoil their fun, or because of a pointless attention to appearances?

If they do, they have missed one of the great truths of life, and it is a pity. For there is a reason, and a great reason, beneath our efforts to chaperon young girls, and it is a reason that is of deep interest to all students of human conditions. Can it not also be appreciated by every intelligent girl? It is this:

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only by protection of the girls of the present generation can the good of the generation that is to come be secured. It is this idea of conserving the best in each individual girl that the race as a whole may not deteriorate, but may improve, that underlies the much-abused and too often abandoned practice of chaperonage.

Even though some mothers may be unconscious of this, it is, nevertheless, the real reason which underlies their efforts to keep "the proprieties," and it is an instinct of protection planted in them by nature herself.

In probably no phase of accepted custom has such a great change taken place as in that of chaperonage. The "duenna," a well-known figure in every home fifty years ago, is no more. In days not so long gone by every young girl of distinguished birth had a lady of discreet years and sedate person who acted as her constant companion, even sitting in the room when she received her guests, and, of course, always accompanying her should she venture even so much as an inch away from the paternal doorstep. Imagine such surveillance to-day!

Yet underneath this world-old custom—and do not let us forget it either—there ran a very astute line of reasoning. It seemed to be better understood then than now, that to protect the pretty girls and

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make them inaccessible greatly augments the devotion of their lovers! A strange law which governs human passion decrees an increase of that ardor which is restrained and circumscribed! The very difficulty set in the path of love often determines the lover's desire to surmount at any price; and this may have been the very reason why great passions are less in evidence than of old, and men more prudent and less anxious to rush into matrimony.

Be this as it may, we can not see that the duenna ever did any harm or ever succeeded in diverting the course of true love!

Is it wise to entirely overthrow the venerable institution of chaperonage, without at least realizing that it has been for ages the outcome of a need expressed by human conditions—that, though the conditions have changed, and the need therefore became modified, it is still present, a very real need, though we may fail to see it in its new and less pronounced form?

This need, but half seen and half understood, is the strong cry of nature that the race on which her very life depends may be guarded at its fount.

"There is no wealth but life," says Ruskin, and life is that mysterious chain, link after link, hand touching hand, voice carrying on the echo of dead voice, which takes us back from to-day to that dark

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time when Saxon giant and swarthy Teuton began to write their history on the mountain-sides and outline for us the future of the human race.

Life, the great wealth, the only wealth, which it is our temptation to see as an impersonal whole, is really composed of innumerable separate beings, and to each is given a little space in the great chain which he may weaken or make strong *by what he is*. Neither must he forget that the next link is predisposed to weakness or to strength by what he himself has been.

In other words, to put it less fancifully, only by protection of the present generation can the good of the generation that is to come be secured.

Underlying the whole custom of chaperonage is the demand of nature that the best in each individual girl shall be conserved in order that the human race as a whole may not deteriorate, but may be strengthened in each new link till "perfection, no more and no less," confronts us, the desire for which animates every force of nature and urges her on to expend such æons of inexhaustible energy.

The instinct of protection is strong in every good mother. Her girl must be kept from evil, all that is best in her must be conserved. Though the mother may not care to analyze her thought further, she is nature's instrument, used for the protection of the

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racial stream, and it is because in her daughter slumbers the potential mother, that everything noble and good must be made a part of her character *now*, that she may be qualified in later years to hand it on.

If all this could be presented to school girls quite simply and without affection much would be gained. Particularly would the mother find herself relieved from the uncomfortable position of having her efforts to chaperon her daughters regarded as an unkind desire to "spoil the fun," or, still worse, as being founded upon suspicion and lack of faith.

If girls could be brought to understand all that lies within them of good or evil for the future of humanity, and to know how great their responsibility is, I think they would find themselves a little more tolerant of the wishes and suggestions of those older than themselves, and better still, they would stand up without complaints and do their share willingly in the great task of making themselves strong and valiant women, fit continuers of the race.

Looking at the matter of chaperonage a little more practically, the mother who has several daughters in different stages of "growing up" will have to decide in her own mind what limitations she may justly put upon their pleasures.

In different places such different customs reign, and public opinion and custom must, after all, set

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the rules by which we mould our lives. Yet there are always some people who stand higher in a community than others. It is wise for the undecided mother to model her conduct after theirs. The important thing is that she shall follow the particular mothers, not the lax. Indeed, she can be expected to have no better standard than theirs unless she is so unfortunate as to have to bring up her children in an environment entirely beneath them. In this case she will have to do the best she can to keep alive in them the ideals and manners of her own girlhood.

Although it is quite impossible to outline at all definitely a course of conduct for a mother whose surroundings and traditions one does not know, there are a few rules which I think may safely be said to be universal.

For instance, a school-girl should be off the streets after dark. It should also be understood that a friend of her own age accompanied by another man or boy does not in any way constitute the kind of protection the world rightly expects a school-girl to have in public. And, however lax a community may be, I think we all agree that it is not advisable for a girl to be seen at a restaurant alone at night with a man. Though there may not be the least harm in any of these things, it is unwise for a young girl to place herself in a position which in-

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vites criticism. There are many other little rules of this kind which I am sure every careful mother must define according to her own position.

The wise mother tries in every way to impress upon her girls that the place in which to see their friends is under their father's roof—not on the streets or at cheap places of amusement.

Girls should have many friends, the more the better—the danger lies in one friend—not in many. If the mother realizes this and makes home an attractive place in which her girls are always free to have their friends, there will be fewer demands for outside amusement.

After all, what the girl wants is to see her friends—the moving-picture shows or the soda-water fountains are mere means to this one end. If the end can be attained by the surely more decent and less dangerous means of receiving the friends in her own home, the girl will gladly avail herself of it.

Has not the mother a great deal of this in her own hands, for does it not lie almost entirely with her whether or not the home is made attractive and the young people her children know drawn into it?

There is no safeguard to a girl like that of having her mother's sympathy, and she can not have this unless the mother knows her friends. It is wise to open the home freely and gladly to all the friends

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our children make, hoping by a kind of natural selection, which works far more securely in the home than out of it, that the unadvisable friends will fall by the wayside, leaving place for the firmer planting of those friendships necessary to the best development of each child's particular character.

Hardly does it seem possible for a helpful friendship, or an association that holds the possibility of ending in a true and noble love, to have its beginning at a street corner or under the arc lights of a moving-picture show!

Then from a purely commercial point of view, does a man value a girl half as much if there are not some few difficulties to overcome before he may secure her companionship? Does he not look upon a girl as a greater prize if she is guarded by her parents and her older brothers as a precious thing? Their very protection marks her as something hard to approach, hard to reach, harder still to win, and is she not for the very boundaries set by their love infinitely more to be desired?

A girl who is known as "easy," who can be secured for any spree at a moment's notice, who does not invite her friends to her own home but will go with them anywhere they may suggest, soon loses her freshness, and with it goes much of her charm.

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For, little as she may wish to admit it, a girl has no sterner judge than the very man whom she allows to get the most out of her. It may seem unfair, and it is unfair, yet it is true, and a man's instinct never tells him an untruth when it comes to "dividing light from vapour" and deciding to the satisfaction of his inner consciousness whether or no the girl he is attracted to is "all right."

The girl who is careful how and when she bestows her favors, who has a few well-chosen friends, and who is protected by her parents from any loose or undesirable followers, has a better time, truer and firmer friends, and when she is loved, is loved more deeply and lastingly than she who, hoping to attract many, forgets everything else in her one effort to make herself popular at any price.

Unfortunately these are facts learned only in the stern school of experience. It would be contrary to all the laws of life if the school-girl were endowed beforehand with a prescience of those things made hers only by experience. Her ignorance, which is not a fault, but a natural condition, is the very reason why a mother's wisdom is so necessary, why also, in a more punctilious age, a duenna was added even to the mother's wisdom. Because we have dispensed with the duenna there is all the more need for a greater maternal wisdom.

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Mothers should speak fearlessly of these things to their girls. If girls are shown why it is that their mother is so urgent in her efforts to protect them and keep them in their own homes, they are very likely to more willingly submit to a surveillance that would be intolerable if it was supposed by them to be rooted in suspicion or envy of their good times.

"But I am perfectly able to take care of myself." Who has not heard these words? Yet the very spirit that prompts a girl to use them proves only too conclusively to heads wiser than her own, that she is not able to take care of herself at all, that she has not yet even begun to understand the mysteries surrounding her being; the underlying reason why the best in her should be so scrupulously conserved.

It will do no harm for every girl who chafes against chaperonage, and who grumbles "but I am perfectly able to take care of myself" to realize that if she is to develop into a pure, noble, efficient woman she must submit to the restrictions of a simple, protected girlhood; that to be truly loved by the Prince Charming of her dreams she must not first have bestowed herself for the mere asking upon every strange youth whose desire for fun prompted him to knock at her soul's inner sanctuary; that to be effective as a wife and mother she must conserve and allow others to conserve, all the chaste and inno-

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cent qualities of her girlhood; that though she need not become a prig or a prude, she must live for the future, not for the pleasure vested only in the transitory experiences of the moment.

A silk purse can not be made out of a sow's ear, neither by any alchemy known to man can a noble, unselfish woman spring from the neglected ashes of a careless spendthrift youth.

There is a custom practised in America, far more than in other countries, which permits a girl to select a "friend" early in her teens, and keep to his attentions only for an indefinite period. Such a monopoly (one can not call it friendship, nor yet is it an engagement) does not always, or even often, end in marriage; neither does it have marriage standing out before it as its acknowledged and legitimate end.

On the contrary, it has the dangerous attribute of giving a wrong kind of license to two persons who are not bound to each other by the sacred hope of a united destiny. The privileges of a lover are given to a man without the sobering responsibilities that should accompany them. The chief harm to the girl is that she is bound, before she is old enough to know what her nature really needs, to an association which is more likely than not to hold for her only a little froth and eventually the Dead Sea fruit of bitter disappointment.

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That these associations do not always end in marriage means little to the man, but to the woman it is everything, for her youth is spent and the very quality by which she is able to attract is gone.

Confining herself to a single " friend " when yet scarcely out of the school-room is often, to a young and inexperienced life, a gateway to tragedy and disaster. I know of one suicide and three cases of hopeless mental derangement which can be directly traced to the influence of associations such as are here described, where year after year slipped by and the man did not mention marriage, until marriage gradually came to be acknowledged as an impossibility. Then the woman realized.

This custom is, happily enough, one which every mother can influence, because she can simply refuse to allow it to exist where her own daughter is concerned. To protect her child from such an association is a responsibility which justly belongs to the mother, and one which the most careless could hardly permit herself to shift.

Broadly speaking, there should be no such thing as an " understanding " between young people. If they love one another, then there must be no delay, no mystery. It must all be open and above-board; the parents must know, the affair be made widely public, the date, even if it is a year off, be set for the

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marriage. This is to protect the girl from the type of man (and unfortunately he exists everywhere) who would like to get something for nothing—who would steal her gold at the price of a few theatre tickets and bubble promises.

The man who loves a woman in the best way, wishes to marry her, and is as eager as she is to tell the whole world and set the day for the wedding.

Yet only experience teaches these things, and a school-girl can not be expected to know them. It is for the mother to instruct her, and it is to the mother's endless blame if by false pride or lack of self-assurance she holds back and does not lay all these matters freely and frankly before her daughters. Do not let them get their ideals from other girls; give them generously of your experience; if necessary compel them to listen, and insist that they shall not sacrifice their priceless youth to any one man. Twenty-five is time enough to specialize. Till then the more the merrier, and the more the better, from every point of view.

Until she is twenty-five, particularly if she is living under her father's roof, a girl must submit to guidance in these matters, and if from sixteen to twenty-five she can be controlled, and in the meantime instructed, she is not likely to make any mistake

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then that will jeopardize her future. It is during these years that she must be saved from herself.

One of the great factors in a girl's development is the happy natural and unconstrained friendships she will make, unmake, and remake, with many different kinds and types of men.

She can learn only harm through an association with one man, unless she loves him and he soon becomes her husband. Any other relationship is false, unnatural, and a permanent injury to the development and character.

## XVII

### WHEN THE CHILDREN MARRY

#### SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

"Care is taken to fit youth of both sexes for society and citizenship. No care whatever is taken to fit them for the position of parenthood. While it is seen that for the purpose of gaining a livelihood an elaborate preparation is needed, it appears to be thought that for the bringing up of children no preparation whatever is needed. While many years are spent by a boy in gaining knowledge of which the chief value is that it constitutes the 'education of a gentleman,' while many years are spent by a girl in those decorative acquirements which fit her for evening parties; not an hour is spent by either in preparation for that gravest of all responsibilities—the management of a family—of all functions which the adult has to fulfil, this is the most difficult."

—HERBERT SPENCER.

IN marriage only is true human development found. Yet how seldom can we say of a marriage that it has been an unqualified success! One need only take up a newspaper, or even investigate in one's immediate neighborhood, to become convinced that true happiness in marriage is the hardest thing in all the world to get.

Realizing this, is it not worth while to try to understand happiness, and to study it in relation

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to marriage? A misunderstanding of what happiness really is and an ignorance of how to go about finding it, is, I believe, at the bottom of many failures, the chief cause of marriage desecrated and of love defiled.

The secret of happiness is held in these three simple words: self-expression through service. The happy people are those who give—not those who receive. Even all the riches of money or love tumbled out before our feet can not secure happiness.

Happiness, that rare state which we glimpse at intervals and long to make our own, is ours only inasmuch as we find self-expression in service to our generation, and to those to whom we particularly belong through love.

Happiness is essentially the result of what we are, not what we have.

Happiness, particularly the happiness of love, demands absolutely nothing from externals, it is neither diminished nor increased by things that are bought and sold.

On the other hand, it is autocratic to a fault in its one demand. It will only feed upon the eternal, the essential, the immortal in selfhood. It is satisfied with nothing less.

There is in every human heart a supreme longing to be understood, to call across the deep in some such

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way that other souls will hear and answer. This call from the human heart out into the world, either to an individual or to a life-work, is self-expression.

As soon as the call is uttered the soul begins to strive for the object or person beloved—unselfish service, giving out all that it has, service of the hand and of the will. The higher and more spiritual the call, the greater is that soul's capacity for service and therefore for happiness.

To put children on the road to find happiness, teach them to use and spend self, in order that they may know the only true joy life has to offer, the joy of service and of self-expression through service.

Break forever in them the peace-destroying thought that happiness can be bought. Happiness does not depend upon outside things. The belief that it does so depend is often the sole reason for an unhappy marriage.

As Carlyle says, "It is not to taste sweet things but to do noble and true things, and vindicate himself under God's heaven as a God-made man, that the poorest son of Adam dimly longs."

Help the children to at least fulfil in a measure this noble longing. Help them by developing in them—not the desire to taste sweet things, but the ability to express themselves before the world in some form of service that is high and true.

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Teach them to give. And above all, teach them that marriage, to be a success, must be entered, as all great vocations are entered, in the spirit of "what can I give," not "what can I get."

Self-expression through service is the best motto a young married couple can have. It is the only definition of true happiness, and I believe that a man and woman who approach marriage in this spirit, with the ideal of service one to the other surmounting every other thought, can not fail to find their heaven here on earth and happiness beyond their wildest dreams.

Children can best be trained for marriage by being first made useful men and women.

Physical and moral sloth, emptiness of life, wandering efforts, these make bitter discontent. To avoid them, help the children to construct with whatever tools they may have at hand. Provide each child with something definite to do in the world. Give him a "use" in the old sense of the word, and he will be happy.

Train children early to look for their vocation, to work for results, to look forward eagerly to the time when their service will really count and they may be allowed to spend themselves for the profit and advance of their age.

Why does a child : to build blocks or make

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a picture-puzzle? Because by such effort all his powers are used, are turned from waste to construction. It is the same as he grows older. A definite work in the world calls forth his will, his energy, his hidden strength. In this is the truest kind of happiness. By taking the bits of unrelated material with which education and environment have surrounded him, by adding cohesion, shape, and definite usefulness thereto, he gradually makes the picture which he was sent into the world to construct. He expresses himself in service. He is happy.

So, in youth, the children are taught to give and are trained in service. All this is a preparation for marriage. There are yet more definite ways.

The boy's practical training for marriage consists of acquiring, while he is still at home, respect for woman, admiration for love and belief in it. It is not fair to expect his wife to teach him these. How is he to learn them? There is but one way: by seeing them, simple virtues that they are, in the daily lives of his parents. They can become ingrained in him in no other way. Thus unconsciously day by day he is trained for the service and reward of marriage.

A girl must go through very much the same process. She sees in her mother's eyes the justification for anything that may seem hard. The mother

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who is a happy wife has her glory written in her face. The daughters are quick to see and understand. They, too, soon come to have the belief, the faith, the mighty hope in their own hearts. They are willing to work with her and learn of her in the preparation time.

Prepare the children for marriage by reverencing your own. Hold it sacred above their heads though the world tremble and your arms ache. They can not believe one thing and see another.

Set up definite ideals within their hearts. Do not hesitate to speak to them of their future power. Make responsibility an interest.

And do not fancy they will not care! Children listen breathlessly to the story of life. Nothing appeals to them so greatly as the truths of the natural and the ideals of the spiritual world, particularly when in the working out of the story they see their own futures imaged!

I will never forget the look in my oldest child's face when I told her one day that if she did not learn to control her temper she would hand this fault on to her own little boys and girls. Put this thought before children as a reason for overcoming their faults and see the result for yourself.

In this way the sense of vocation is stimulated, and the children are taught gradually to look forward

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to parenthood as the highest of life's privileges, and of their school days as a preparation for its proper and just fulfilling. "Where your heart is there will your treasure be also." We do best that which we wish to do. Love is the truest director of human endeavor, and what we love we work for. Therefore, help the children to love, to give, that later on, in the giving, they may find happiness.

Teach the boys and girls also that the happiness of marriage depends entirely upon what husband and wife contribute to enrich it from within. Margaret Sangster puts it thus:

- "Love wore a suit of hoddern gray  
And toiled within the fields all day.
- "Love wielded pick and carried pack  
And bent to heavy loads the back.
- "Though meagre fed and sorely lashed  
The only wage Love ever asked,
- "A child's wan face to kiss at night  
A woman's face by candle light."

Here, quite humbly, and by the mere act of giving is love dignified and happiness won. It is the same be the marriage among kings or peasants.

"My dear, love must be fed—" so my wise old grandmother used to say with a shake of her head. Teach the children this, for sometimes it is the last

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thing about which men and women think, till, starved and thirsting love lies dying at their feet.

To begin married life very much in love is not at all enough, though many foolish children think so. Love must be added to day by day, earnestly, devotedly, without a thought of self.

This food, upon which love mysteriously thrives, and without which it dies, is service of mind and heart and will. It is the very essence of the spirit, "what shall I give?" The extreme antithesis of the spirit, "what shall I get?"

To consistently present this truth to the children from the beginning is to prepare them for a happy marriage.

If a boy is led to believe that he can only win love in proportion to the size of his income, that neglect and even unfaithfulness when he is a husband can be paid for with sufficient gold, that a wife's tears are easily assuaged by a new jewel, that "happiness" may be bought for both by a round of artificial pleasure, that his only duty to his wife is to make plenty of money for her to spend—if these are the ideals that have been shown him in his youth, what can be expected of him other than an effort to live up to them?

If marriage is a failure for many women, may it not be because as girls they were nurtured in idle-

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ness and ignorance, sent husband-hunting in their teens by foolish mothers, taught to trust in their fleeting prettiness and a thin veneer of very new manners, to effect the speedy capture of a man—any man, provided he has money enough to keep them, still ignorant, still mannerless, still foolish spend-thrifts of life's golden sand?

Instead of bringing up girls in idleness with only one thought—marriage to any one at any cost, teach them that the world demands efficiency, not uselessness, and that to earn its respect they must do some one thing well. Also, let the ideal for boys be self-developing work rather than money-making work, and see the different results of work done from love rather than from necessity.

There is less extravagance, less waste, less ignorance, better management and a more profitable grade of effort among girls who have spent a few years before marriage in service to the world.

Some one has said: "Give a woman a good trade and you put in her hands the weapon that is going to reform matrimony." There are, alas, thousands of wives who have to endure every kind of indignity because they would not know where to go or what to do if the support of their husbands was withdrawn.

The woman who has her "use" in the world, who is independent and resourceful is more likely

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to make a success of marriage than she who has drifted and led an aimless, unproductive existence.

Entire dependence upon the husband has been at the bottom of innumerable tragedies, and parents who fit their daughters to be efficient women in some one of the world's great callings fit them, at the same time, though they may not realize it, to be happy wives.

The woman who has a profession or who is skilled in some work or trade goes to her marriage with the comfort in her heart of knowing that if her husband should die, or if she should have to support him, instead of he her, which in this queer world is often the case, she could do so, and still retain much of the happiness of life.

The wife who has been educated to a proper independence of spirit and has proved that she is able to do a useful profitable work in the world, by her very years of earnest service, wins her husband's comradeship and true respect.

Mothers, up and think for a moment, try to realize how good it would be for the race if you gave the same kind of thought to directing the lives of your girls as you do to the education and preparation of your boys!

The future of the nation—even the race—depends upon the purity and strength of woman, yet,

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strange as it may seem, she is not brought up to look with any definiteness upon her real work in life, encouraged to prepare for it, or even instructed in it. Yet is it not true that we fail as parents in a very deep and essential way unless we give our daughters a sense of vocation, unless we make them feel from the time they are children, that to be the wife of a good man and the mother of his children is to have done that thing in the world for which they were created?

I imagine the hands of a thousand mothers flying up in the air. "How can we do this? Girls do not wish to settle down to home-life. Girls are not what they used to be. It is very different now—" Yes it is, very different now; yet let us be quite sure we are fair before we blame all the difference on the girls.

There are mothers everywhere in America who aspire to a different kind of life for their daughters than the life which they themselves lived as girls and young married women. These mothers cook, wash, iron, and slave from early morning until late at night that their daughters may have fresh, pretty dresses to wear, dainties to eat, time to "play the piano," and take the air. Can the girls whose point of view has thus been allowed to form in idleness and self-indulgence be held entirely to blame for their actions? I think not.

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Why do mothers thus humble themselves that their daughters may make a hypothetical advance? Do they, after all, get a kind of vicarious delight in the white hands and pretty dresses and fine airs adopted by their girls?

Possible self-advancement does hang like a golden apple of temptation before the eyes of every American girl who is clever enough or pretty enough to take the upward step, and it is not at all unlikely that the mother also sees this golden fruit and connives by her own self-abasement at its capture. Can we marvel then at the lack of a more serious sense of vocation in the daughters?

I once heard the father of two very rich and beautiful girls say that he had had each one of them go through a hard business course. Why, you may ask, as they were both heiresses? For this very reason did their wise father have them taught finance and the proper administration of wealth. Neither of them should lead an idle life. Neither of them should become a dupe to the first man who came along to claim her wealth. Their minds were trained in the business questions and methods of the day; so-called "business" was not unintelligible to them; they were fit to be the stewards of their means.

College, a business education, courses in domestic science, special training for social service, journal-

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ism, teaching, trained-nursing, social secretary work, scientific housekeeping, the professional development of a special talent, these are all avenues of self-expression and service for women, and a few years spent in earnest effort to "make good" in any definite direction out in the world should help a girl greatly to form her judgment, to become tolerant and able, and eventually to make a success of her marriage.

Even little girls can be trained to think of these things; they will make all the better women for having had a preparation time. "What am I going to be?" is the paramount question of boyhood, for boyhood is essentially a time of preparation and every good boy feels it. Preparation for what? For his life-work, his vocation. Once give a man a life-work, and make him feel that to shirk it is to play the coward before his better self, and you have given him the one tool with which he can overcome the world.

Girls need the help of vocation quite as much as boys. They also need to be fortified by a time of preparation and the sense of having a work to do in the world. What is the work for which woman is best fitted, and what would we point out to our little girls as their vocation?

God has made woman the keeper of hum

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Into her hands He has placed the most awful and most mysterious of his gifts. In Paradise he made her first the wife and then the mother of man and she has trod the thorny path and gathered the immortal roses of her peculiar work since that day. Yet for this vocation, which has to do with the sacred trust of giving and preserving life, there is no preparation.

Here is a little outline, which I hope may help some mothers, of a way in which at each stage of a girl's life she may be influenced to regard motherhood and home-making as her true vocation, may, in other words, be educated toward her profession:

**CHILDHOOD.**—In childhood use one of the greatest instructors we have—play. Encourage the little girls to play games that develop their natural love for children and interest in home problems. Let their toys be dolls, a doll house, a small broom, and sweeper, clothes-washing outfit, a play store, cooking stove, little sewing machine, etc. By means of play they will find their interests gradually awakened all along the line of progress toward their ultimate destiny.

**EARLY GIRLHOOD.**—In many ways it is possible for girls to begin early in life to share their mother's confidence and lighten her burden. Sex-hygiene, if carefully and moderately taught, is a great help here. Once a girl understands the story of life her enthusi-

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asm and interest and allegiance can not fail to be aroused.

**GIRLHOOD.**—Girls who share the responsibilities of their home are usually those who love it most. The daughter should not be treated as a favored boarder but as a contributor to the home. Now is the time gently and earnestly to put into the girl's hand the tools of her future profession. The mother who says, "Oh, it's so much easier to do it myself," is doing her daughter a fatal wrong. Housework, marketing, the care of money, sewing, patience and unselfishness with children, these she must have if she is to be in her turn a successful home-maker.

**WOMANHOOD.**—When school is over, even if there is not the daily bread to earn, nothing is better for a girl than to take up some definite work. There are many free courses in cooking, nursing, administration, scientific housekeeping, teaching and social service. Eugenics, psychology, and physiology are interesting and developing subjects to study.

Suppose, some one may suggest, that girls who have been thus elaborately prepared for the profession of motherhood should after all not marry! What then? Has not a lot of valuable time and energy been wasted? Most assuredly not. A course of training such as I have here suggested develops a woman along all the lines in which she is best [redacted]

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to influence her generation. Many women who have spent their whole lives in "mothering" have never actually given life.

To prepare for motherhood and home-making develops and perfects the highest instincts woman possesses and there is always a place for her to exercise her profession and a corner of the world crying out for her ministrations. Even if she never comes to the full glory of her life yet will she in no way be debarred from carrying on her vocation.

A woman who has been trained as I suggest, if she marries, will bring to her husband's home clear judgment, self-reliance, a knowledge of her work as the dispenser of his means, that will win his instant respect and deepen and solidify his love. It is because so many parents encourage their girls to be luxurious, ignorant, improvident, and selfish that marriage is many times a failure.

Girls come to it with only one thought: "What can I get?" and then when they find instead that their lot is almost all to give, they begin to complain and think their marriage a mistake. To the woman who is willing to express herself in service for those she loves will come the sanctification of her work. The measure of her gift will be returned to her from those "mysterious spiritual fastnesses" from which she draws her strength.

## XVIII

### WHEN THE CHILDREN MARRY

#### PHYSICAL PREPARATION

"We know that the dead do not die. We know now that it is not in our churches that they are to be found, but in the houses, the habits of us all. That there is not a gesture, a thought, a sin, a tear, an atom of acquired consciousness that is lost in the depths of the earth; and that at the most insignificant of our acts our ancestors arise, not in their tombs where they move not, but in ourselves where they always live."

—MAURICE MAETERLINCK.

No matter how faithfully we have taught the children what true happiness is, and have helped them to seek it; no matter how earnestly we have tried to raise them up with bodies and souls fit to continue the race, they can not learn everything by precept, nor even by example. There are some things we must tell them in plain words and as well as we are able, that they may understand the natural laws which govern marriage, and human life, and help in making both successful.

For in knowledge, I believe, lies the hope and future of the human family. We must break through "the conspiracy of silence," which has for

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so many centuries held back or veiled from the boys and girls who are to be the parents of the future, a knowledge of their responsibilities.

We can not begin too soon or speak too seriously to children upon the subject of their probable parenthood. Far back in his childhood the little boy begins to think of the "not impossible she" and the little girl to plan what she will do "when she is married."

Anything we say to a child about his future is thrilling to him. Just try it and see how the big eyes open, the little mouth draws in its breath more swiftly and the wistful face is turned up with earnest trust. Tell children in the beginning—it can do no harm—what it means to be a good parent and how everything thought and done in youth will influence the little children who are to be theirs some wonderful far-off day when they are men and women.

Teach them Longfellow's beautiful lines:

"No action, whether foul or fair,  
Is ever done but it leaves somewhere  
A record, written by fingers ghostly  
As a blessing or a curse, and mostly  
In the greater weakness or greater strength  
Of the acts which follow it."

In this way one gets hold of the point of view, and, slowly but surely, moulds within each child a

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perfectly conscious attitude toward marriage and parenthood,

Children thus trained know, because mother and father have told them, that they must do the best they can, at home, at school, and later on out in the world. Why? Because—ah, here is the secret—they have a message to give, a standard to keep, the precious lamp of life to hand on.

We can go even further: we can teach them in simple words to reverence the body, for it is the temple of life. From this early lesson further knowledge will naturally spring—they will learn why health and purity are necessary, necessary as the only means of preserving the temple fit to give and receive life, further reverenced as the only true basis for marriage.

Thus our children will gradually come to know from patient daily teaching what conditions are favorable to the improvement of the race, and also the sterner lesson of those which foredoom children born under them to ruin.

Heredity is an awful thing, but happily for us it works for good as quickly as it works for evil. There is no surer way of improving the quality of human life and character than by means of selection through marriage, the best selecting the best, with

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the result that from sound, temperate marriages, are born sound, temperate, well-equipped children.

Once this knowledge is given to children, made bone of their bone, flesh of their flesh, they will find it difficult to depart from it and increasingly difficult to act against it.

Respect for the body and knowledge of its laws—these are ready and true weapons against temptation. “Raising men means more to this age and country than raising wheat or building railroads or cities; a nation is judged by the people it turns out.”

Social-hygiene, which is the practical aspect of the thrilling study of how to “raise men,” is now being taught in 138 schools and colleges throughout the land, and in innumerable homes. In no way, if it is taught carefully and with moderation, can we more surely strengthen the race. Especially where it is found possible for the mother to give the knowledge directly to her child.

Prosperity is enervating. Absolutism leads to laziness. When a people is ripe, it begins to decay.

The surest way to prevent this decay is to strengthen the next generation by giving it as parents to-day’s best men and women. We must add one more restriction to those of class, color, money, religion, and even politics which already surround marriage—that of mental and physical fitness to

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assume its responsibilities. Public Opinion must ask first, instead of not at all, concerning a proposed marriage, "and what of the children?"

Some one has said that it takes three hundred years to make a Gladstone. Time must be considered in the making of manhood. In building the great human race each step is of vital importance, each step tells either on the side of weakness or of strength. Manhood can not be bought or sold. It is created only through generations of struggle, self-denial, deliberate choice of good, deliberate open-eyed refusal of evil.

This puts a grave responsibility upon youth—some may think too grave—yet careless in the hands of youth the destiny of the human race hangs like a bauble. That it shall no longer so do is our desire, *ours*, for every one of us is intimately concerned.

Teach children that through man alone the destiny of man is lost or won, that as the individual lives to-day so will his children live after him; that all his energy, all his endeavor is not too much nor yet enough to offer, that the "bauble" which he now holds may be handed on to his children, glowing with exultant force and promise.

"Education is a drawing out, and you can not draw out what is not there—no matter how good our polishing, we must have silver and diamonds to work

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upon, not pewter and pebbles." In other words, there is no use in educating for marriage persons who are unfit to assume its responsibilities.

Marriage, to be truly successful, must only take place between the physically and mentally fit. From such marriages the silver and diamonds which regenerate us spring—children who are noble, spiritual, vigorous, and who make for the strength of the race.

Eugenics, about which we hear so much nowadays, is the science of race-culture, and its aim is to provide the best material for education to work upon. Its aim, in other words, is to secure the heredity of the next generation by means of selection through marriage; the best choosing the best *now*.

Could this be done, could the whole world by one great effort see that the right man and woman marry and the wrong do not, all children born thereafter would be silver and diamonds, and the pewter and pebbles which hold back the race because of their structural inability to take the polish we have for them, would gradually disappear.

What a mighty task, what a stupendous thought, disinterested, fraught with spiritual dignity and of the utmost importance to the welfare of the human race! Is there any one who can fail to be stirred by it?

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Think of the result, if it could be accomplished, of even two generations of denial of parenthood to the unfit and systematic education of the children of good stock! "What man could do for animals and plants, can he not do for himself? Give imagination its fleetest and strongest wing, it can never conceive a task so worth the doing."

Only two or three generations and there would be such a reduction of insanity, of drunkenness, of consumption, of chronic disease, of feeble-mindedness and epilepsy that these familiar burdens of the human race would slip off, to be left behind forever in the march onward toward the perfect man.

Impossible as this ideal may now seem, there does not appear to be any way to lessen hereditary disease other than through marriage.

Could marriage be controlled many of our greatest social problems would suddenly find themselves solved. They simply would no longer exist.

It sometimes seems strange that the law, created to prevent men and women from doing each other evil, should stand by in silence and allow the wholesale slaughter of qualities which the patient lives of generations of good men and women have busied themselves in building up. This slaughter takes place when the fit mates with the unfit; for however good

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one may be, where good mates with bad there can be but one result—the taint is handed on.

So it is that a man of good stock destined by heredity to stand only for the best may ignorantly unite with a feeble-minded woman and start in the world a never-ending stream of criminals, imbeciles, and moral degenerates. And this same man, like the much-written-of "Jukes," marrying again, this time a strong and virile woman, is quite likely to have as his descendants from this wife men and women who count only for good in their generation.

People sometimes have a little way of laughing at heredity and of speaking with great confidence of environment. It may not be amiss for us to study the family histories of such men as Max Jukes and Jonathan Edwards, for there in plain figures do we see before us the sum total of wretchedness arising from a marriage of the unfit which predisposed its descendants to misery and vice, as we see also the value to the generations to come of the mating of silver and diamonds; for, from silver and diamonds come sound minds and sound bodies, and these are the guiding stars of useful and beneficial lives.

The following statement has been printed before, but it is worth reproducing. Heredity as a theory has been overworked of late years, but that it

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is not to be disregarded is shown in the startling comparison between the families of Max Jukes and Jonathan Edwards:

MAX JUKES (Born 1720)	JONATHAN EDWARDS (Born 1703)
1200 descendants identified.	1394 descendants identified.
300 in the poorhouse—2300 years in all.	295 college graduates.
300 died in childhood.	12 college presidents.
440 viciously diseased.	65 college professors.
400 physical wrecks.	100 clergymen and musicians.
50 notorious prostitutes.	75 army and navy officers.
7 murderers.	60 prominent authors.
60 habitual thieves — aver-	60 physicians.
age 12 years in jail.	100 lawyers.
130 convicted of crime.	30 judges.
"None of them ever con-	80 held public office.
tributed to social wel-	1 Vice-President.
fare." Their actual and	3 U. S. Senators.
potential cost to society	"It is not known that any
was \$250,000.	of them were ever con-
	victed of crime."

It is appalling to look behind the cold figures of statistics such as these to the sum of human suffering they represent. Nor must we forget that each doomed child, each suffering parent, and each ruined home drags down the race and pollutes the source of the nation's supply at its very fount so that the infected streams flow on in ever-widening circles.

This brings us to the question, what class of peo-

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ple may without prejudice be called unfit for marriage? Science answers unfalteringly, the imbecile, the insane, the alcoholic, the drug-taker, the chronically diseased.

If these marry, their children, while perhaps not showing their heredity very clearly at the start, will undoubtedly hand down moral weakness to their progeny, and thus gradually, like the widening ripples on a lake, the strain will become polluted and the family dethroned. It is the descendants of such people classed above as unfit for marriage who swell the ranks of paupers, thieves, and prostitutes in every land.

How shall these marriages be prevented?

"Knowledge," as some one has said, "is the great thing. No man will gamble against a sure thing." In the instruction of youth lies the great hope of the future. Give youth the Greek ideal, the love and worship of the beautiful, and out of it will grow a natural dislike for degeneracy.

In Philadelphia\* there are to-day 250,000 children in the public schools. Of these, 2 per cent., or 5000, are feeble-minded. Of these again 213 are feeble-minded by heredity. This means that when they grow up they will transmit their feebleness to their children. All these marriages would be unfit.

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\* Report of the Philadelphia Baby-Saving Show, 1913.

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Feeble-mindedness is now known to be incurable. This lays the duty of segregation very urgently upon us. As parents, as philanthropists, as governors in any department of the nation's weal, it is one of the greatest needs of our age to see that feeble-minded persons, particularly girls, be permanently segregated. This is the quickest, surest way of redeeming our race and helping it toward its highest fulfilment.

To bring the matter right down to to-day, and to the individual, what shall we do?

We who are already parents have taken the fatal steps—our children's heredity is assured. There is still left us environment and education. With these powerful allies we can do much. With them we are almost certain to be able at least to direct our children's point of view. We must teach them that the greatest privilege that will ever come into their lives is the privilege of parenthood, and we must patiently train them for that, the greatest of all vocations. When the time comes for them to marry we shall have so emphasized in them the respect for moral and physical health that they will turn quite as simply and naturally from the thought of marrying into a degenerate stock as they would from opening their arms to a Sandwich Islander or a Hottentot!

Those who are not married have yet in their

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hands, unplayed, life's greatest card. "Man's nature," says Havelock Ellis, "like all else that is most essential in him, is rooted in a soil that was formed very long before his birth. In this, as in every other respect, he draws the elements of his life from his ancestors, however new the recombination may be and however greatly it may be modified by subsequent conditions. A man's destiny stands not in the future but in the past. It is the most serious and sacred duty of the future father to choose one-half of the ancestral and hereditary character of his future child: it is the most serious and sacred duty of the future mother to make a similar choice. They have together determined the stars that will rule his fate."

Realizing this, it seems eminently sane and advisable to consider many things other than dower and "prospects." Mental and physical health are of vastly greater importance. Two young persons of sound heredity and clean lives soon settle very satisfactorily the doubts of older heads as to "how they shall get along." It is only when ancestral evil and inherited weakness threaten that the real storm begins to roll up behind them.

To make this storm an impossibility is the aim of Eugenics. As fast as Public Opinion can be educated laws are being demanded requiring that a

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health certificate shall be appended to every marriage license. In Connecticut, Washington, Colorado, Michigan, and Utah such laws have already been obtained. The Health Department of the General Federation of Women's Clubs reports that "Social-hygiene work is under way in twenty-five states."

The president of the New York Legislative League has twice presented a bill relative to the health certificate and, though at the last session of the Legislature it was for the second time refused, the time will surely come, and soon, when health certificate and marriage license will be obtained together as a matter of ordinary routine. Until then there is always the physician. He will be found quite able to tell any man or woman whether or not she or he is fitted to marry.

Medical history teems with instances of tragedy and separation caused by neglect of just so simple a precaution as this, and of disastrous marriages consummated where either husband, wife, or perhaps both, were entirely unqualified to hand on the precious gift of life to another generation.

Health is a more valuable heirloom than wealth, and where health marries health, there will be children sturdy of body and vigorous of mind; children as God meant children to be, not children as man, by his failure and selfishness, has, alas! too often created them.

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Will it not make for happier marriages if children are told these things very seriously by their parents? It is through the minds of the children of to-day that we reach the public opinion of to-morrow, and if we teach them all that health or lack of it means, all that beauty of mind and spirit means, will they not from very fear shun vice, and from very love follow and covet that which is good?

Ignorance is at the bottom of most sin, and enlightenment can not do other than help men and women to choose more wisely in the greatest crisis that their life can hold.

## XIX

### A FOURTH "R" IN EDUCATION

"Childhood is a tender thing and easily wrought into any shape. Yea, and the very souls of children readily receive the impressions of those things that are dropped into them while they are yet but soft; but when they grow older, they will, as all hard things are, be more difficult to be wrought upon. And as soft wax is apt to take the stamp of the seal, so are the minds of children to receive the instructions imprinted on them at that age."

—PLUTARCH.

"Without faith the new generation is like a city built on sand. Without the discipline and the inspiration of God the young boys and girls who will all too soon be standing in our shoes will go through life with hungry souls, with nothing to live up to, and very little to live for."

—COSMO HAMILTON.

THE Bishop of London is fond of telling this story of a woman who went into the choicest room of the Uffizi Gallery where are collected probably the greatest masterpieces of the world. "I don't think much of your pictures," she said to the attendant at the door. "Madame," he replied, "it is not the pictures in this room which are on trial, it is the spectator."

So it is with Christianity. It is not necessary to make any defence of Christianity or apology for it.

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Christianity is not on trial before us. We are on trial before it. And, what is more, we can not drift in regard to it. As we approach middle-age, we find we must take a definite attitude; we must be either for or against the Christian ideal. Life forces decision upon us, and we choose in spite of ourselves.

Youth, to the earnest soul, is a time of peculiar enthusiasm, of peculiar ability to feel. But to every young mother comes a day when the bird in her heart sings just a little less frequently of the joy of living, when the smile on her lips becomes a little forced, and the time of dreams less frequent.

This is because around the pure, still joy of youth the responsibility of life, like the surge of a mighty sea about an island, is heard to clamor. Soon the soul knows that its winged sandals are already wet, that youth has slipped from its shoulders, that the time has come to plunge into the waves, battle with them, or die. This battle is not for money, for health, or love, or happiness, but for the spiritual life.

Every one in middle-age is fighting this fight. Trying to keep fortified the spiritual territory of youth, and if God wills to add to it with the passing of the years. It is in the heat and uncertainty of this battle that some of us get to look back upon youth with its easy beliefs and sense of safety as upon a paradise.

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Yet, stop and think! Middle-age holds for us that priceless moment when the grapes are purple, the wheat golden, the rose full blown. It should be a time of the ripest fullness of joy, the time of rewards, of effort consecrated by success, of the unspeakable rapture of spiritual bloom.

In youth we are listeners. But with life's zenith comes to the soul its hour of speech. In middle-age we must show our hand. In middle-age we stand revealed without the softening background of youth. We have made niches in the preparation time. Now, where are the statues? This is the question the world asks and has a right to ask. And this is the question we must make good before our children.

Middle-age is a very serious time, but it is a paradise too—a paradise indeed where memory and hope meet, and where we speak out fearlessly, as one having authority, of the things which we have spiritually made our own.

So we must give out to the children. It will not do to send them to church alone, to let them drift, to do nothing, in fact, that is vital and decisive to help them win for themselves the unutterable blessings of the spiritual life.

For we do not seem to realize that spiritual development both in ourselves and in our children obeys the same familiar laws which govern every other

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human output, that to the three "R's" of education we must add a fourth—*Religion*.

Parents—even careful parents—often say, "We do not intend to influence our children one way or the other. We do not intend to force them to go to church or to teach them anything that might prejudice them—let them be perfectly free. We do not believe in compulsory religion."

But would they say the same in regard to education? Would they allow their children to sit aimlessly waiting for education, ready-made and complete, like a ripe plum, to fall into their laps? Would they say, "We do not intend to influence our children to learn to read or write, we do not intend to send them to school or teach them anything about history or geography, let them be perfectly free. We do not believe in compulsory education."

Yet I am certain that such parents do not really want their boys and girls to grow up unbelievers. They probably earnestly wish them to have religious and spiritual development, but they are afraid, afraid of dogma, of superstition, of ceremony; their very intelligence causes them to hesitate, and blinds them to the spirit of Christianity because its letter, un-life-giving and obtrusive, blocks the way.

Nevertheless, if we would have the spirit we must accept the letter. If we want religion for the

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children we must have them grounded in it, taught it, trained in it, just as they are taught and trained and grounded in other ways. A little dogma is healthy and does no harm, it no more destroys higher spirituality than learning to parse destroys appreciation of English prose.

But we must give the same grade of spiritual teaching that we do intellectual. It is when dogma is in the hands of ignorance that it becomes dangerous. It is just here that many parents make the great mistake. Any kind of teacher is good enough for the Bible, but for the things of the world and of the intellect—oh, how differently they choose!

"How ashamed we are if we do not know the plot of the operas we go to see, or the stories of the Shakespeare or Ibsen plays; yet we go to church Sunday after Sunday without taking the least trouble to really understand what it is all about! We never even think of the plot!"

A clever woman spoke these words the other day, a woman who stands for everything that is big, progressive, and really worth while in life. I think she voiced one of the greatest needs of our day, the need of a better grade of spiritual education both for parents and children.

How are we who hold the responsi

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parenthood to secure this education for our children? Very simply indeed; by seeing that they are instructed spiritually with the same care and thoroughness we demand in other departments of their life.

And is it really being fair to the child to send him out into the world ignorant and untrained in spiritual matters? Is it not less fair than to leave him untrained in any other line of effort? Because such training the world is unlikely indeed to supply, and after childhood is left behind it is difficult to bend the will and heart toward religion; as difficult as to teach the hand of middle-age to use a pen.

How we drill the children that they may stand well in school, obey promptly, have good manners, show gentleness and courtesy—we do this often at the expense of their spiritual life, for it takes all our time, and we forget that drilling in religion is a discipline equally necessary to the development of character.

Though children must be clothed and fed and educated, the thing that really matters is not what they have or what they know, but what they *are*.

Sometimes I think that we are grown Pagan once again, inasmuch as the goddess Hygeia receives so great an offering of time that the altar of the Living God is cold! However this may be, we do worship

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health, and a large proportion of our thoughts go toward contriving new ways of adding physical rather than spiritual fitness to our children's equipment for fighting the good fight.

Though this care of the body is so good, so very good, there is really only one possible use for a healthy body—that it shall the better convey and expedite the spirit! The body is the soul's house, and only as such should pains be taken to keep it beautiful. To glorify it for its own sake is Pagan, and a disrespect to higher things. We are striving to make perfect the body only that the soul may have a less interrupted field of action. The body is the habitation of the soul and it is only as such that we should worship and serve it.

To what end is our striving to make a race of healthy children, if it is not that they may mentally and spiritually—not by virtue of brawn and muscle—outstrip the generations that have gone before? Man has a soul as well as a body to save, and the mothers of the race must not forget it.

Though "schooling" can be bought, the child's true education comes from a daily living under cultural influences. And, following the same law, true education in religion comes from the homes and through the parents. This kind of knowledge is most contagious, for it is the fruit of love, and the children

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will absorb, possibly without realizing it, both love and knowledge and so unconsciously lay the foundation for their own spiritual lives.

But, some one may say, suppose the parents are not of this type, are not in their inmost selves followers of the Christian life?

Then I can only beg them to "study the plot," to give Christianity a fair chance by becoming informed as to its ideals, to take the trouble to look into it for themselves and see if it is not something that they wish to have for their children, something just as important and just as necessary as healthy bodies or a worldly education; something, in fact, that they can not afford to do without.

Knowledge leads to love—it is only ignorance we fear—and those who once know what the Church of Christ has to offer will not rest until at any cost they gain its influence for those they love.

The history of Christianity is full of dramatic and inspiring stories. If the children are told these stories their allegiance is quickly won, and enthusiasm and allegiance won in youth are won for all time. It is indifference we fear most, and to overcome indifference the children together with their parents must know, love, and feel intimate with their religion.

This intimate love and knowledge can not be

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gained for a child by sending him vaguely to church with his governess while his parents play tennis or golf; or by driving him off to Sunday School where he is taught by a possibly very good, but usually very uninteresting, local teacher.

As is true in everything else, it is example, the faith and reliance upon religion shown by his parents which have their results in the child. Nothing will shake his faith so quickly and completely as the suspicion that persons older than himself do not believe what they are trying to make him believe—that they are not “in earnest.” A child’s faith once shaken, and it is but a short step to the time when the whole fabric comes tumbling down around his ears.

Parents who have themselves made spiritual progress look upon the holy things of life with reverence, and this is good for the child. Such parents believe in love, in the sanctity of marriage, in the watchful care of a heaven-directed Providence. They insist, more by example than by preaching, that their children form the habit of observing Sunday, of being taught God’s word, of attending a church. They command obedience to the higher law, as representatives of a Father in Heaven, to the end that their boys and girls may become soldiers and pioneers in this dark world, of the spiritual life.

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They speak simply and unaffectedly of God, at the same time showing the beauty of earthly relations.

I have often wondered how a certain mother I know managed to influence her four rather headstrong boys toward religion. Though each holds a position of importance and trust in the world and all are thoroughly of the world in many ways, they are strong churchmen, and loyally devoted in letter and spirit to the Christian ideals. I have come to think that it is because she never preaches, never insists, never argues, but simply *is*.

That the sons of clergymen are proverbially bad is too often because such sons are forced to make a show of religion from the time they are born, and are made sick of the whole thing through the dictatorial attitude of their parents, who narrowly insist upon a parade of virtue at all times, and an eternal going-to-church.

Suppose that we have given both in influence and education what must we demand of the children? We can not gain their kingdom for them. What is it fair and right to ask of them? What should be their work in the building of the house not made with hands?

First of all, respect in word and deed for all the higher things of life, for human relationships as well as for divine, for everything spiritual, whether it be

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friendship, love, knowledge, virtue, simple affection, or the church.

That amid the wide-spread secularization of the day a certain part of every Sunday be spent in the worship of God and all of it in restful, harmless relaxation.

That they learn to pray, not perfunctorily and from the lips, but deeper, from the heart and will, and that they do so regularly.

That they read some few lines from the Bible daily, even if it be but a single verse.

That they definitely join a church, and definitely associate themselves with it by giving some portion of their time in corporate work for others.

That they read at least one sound book on some moral or religious subject every year.

No man or woman, no boy or girl can be anything but better for adhering to a few simple rules like these. No matter how faltering the faith or dark the outlook of the later years, a youth in which a careful practising of the Christian Ideal in little things has been the habit must help.

And what is the Christian Ideal? It is well to keep it always in the children's view, for our ~~strivings~~ after spirituality amount to very little until we know what the fruit of the spirit is. St. Paul says,

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,

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suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against such there is no law," and the Christian Ideal has always seemed to me best expressed in these familiar lines:

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God.

And to these words may be added a verse from the Prophet Micah and another from the Apostle James, both seeming to hold, as a drop of water mirrors the universe, the whole plan and wonder of the Christian Ideal:

" And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

" Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless, and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

It is good to remember that  
these are mostly concerned  
in a very logical plan

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nothing to do with ceremony, is outlined in the verses just quoted. Think of the sorrow that might have been prevented in the last two thousand years if men had acted Christianity instead of talking theology! "How much misery would have been saved Europe," says Sir John Lubbock, "if Christians had been satisfied with the Sermon on the Mount."

Therefore what we think matters very little. It is what we are and do that counts. Let the children feel that beyond loyalty to the form of faith they have adopted, it is the quality of their life, the quality of their worship that really matters. They must come to their religion with the same thought as should be theirs on their wedding day: "What can I give?" not "What can I get?"

Only by giving to God can one get anything back. Being in one's place at church is a sign of allegiance and an act of worship. Teach the children that it is in the act of offering themselves through worship that they come nearest to God. This thought is so often overlooked, the motive of hearing a good sermon or listening to good music being given as a substitute.

I used often to hear a wise old lady decry the custom of following a brilliant preacher around from church to church or of changing one's church often,

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in order to hear better music or for some such reason. She taught her children that loyalty and allegiance to one church were in themselves a spiritual help, and that the duty of each family was to hold up the hands of the man set to minister to them in every way possible, whether they "liked" him or not. They went to church to worship God and to offer up their prayer and praise and thanksgiving—nothing else mattered.

This same mother told me just before she died, at nearly ninety years of age, that all through her early motherhood it had been her custom to go every New Year's eve to the bedsides of her sleeping children and supplicate with Almighty God that they might every one be spared to be noble men and women and to further His Kingdom upon the earth.

In simple loyalty to such mothers who have gone before must we not do our best to hand on the gifts they have enriched by their prayers and life, and to continue their work?

Let me close these thoughts with a few suggestions as to Sunday reading.

I have often noticed that children seem to be peculiarly anxious to be read to, or to read, on Sunday. Their minds seem more than usually alert and hungry. This is probably because there is no school,

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nor the usual lessons to do; and also because they are stimulated by companionship with their parents.

In other words, there is a unique opportunity about Sunday—it is the day of days to give out real things to the little ones—the worst of all days upon which to leave them with the servants or to saturate them with the spirit and ideals of the comic supplement and the Sunday newspaper. Let them once begin with it and they are in no mood for anything but idleness and amusement. The whole day has become hopelessly secularized. An opportunity to give out something real and of eternal value has been lost. An opportunity of this kind lost can never be regained. Try to hold out to the child something that he will like better than the comic section of the newspaper. Make the Sunday reading a pleasure by taking an active interest in it yourself. Here are a few excellent books to read aloud on Sunday:

In God's Garden, Steedman.

An Old, Old Story-Book, by Tappin, illustrated by Kellar.

Old Testament Stories by Chisholm (for little children), colored illustrations.

Stories from the Old Testament by Platt (for older children), very beautifully illustrated.

Saints and Heroes, by Hodges, for older children.

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Sunday Book of Poetry, by Alexander.

Child's Book of Saints, by Canton.

Parables from Nature, by Gatty.

Stories from the life of Christ, by Nelman (for older children).

Miss Olcott, in her valuable book on Children's Reading, says: "If children are not too young it is well to read the Bible systematically through to them, skipping Genealogies and unsuitable parts. If, however, the children are quite young the following Bible stories will interest them. Children should be urged to memorize beautiful and helpful selections from the Scriptures. A list of such is appended here. The treasures of the Bible are literary as well as religious and moral. The man or woman is not thoroughly educated who is unfamiliar with Bible stories and allusions constantly used in secular literature because of their force in pointing a moral. In making the selections here this literary side has been considered as well as the religious side."

From the Old Testament:

The Creation and the Garden of Eden, Genesis I-III; Noah's Ark, Genesis VI-IX; The Tower of Babel, Genesis XI; Lot's Wife, Genesis XVIII-XIX; Abraham and Isaac, Genesis XXII; Jacob's Ladder, Genesis XXVII; Joseph, Genesis XXXVII-XXXIX-L; The Ten Plagues and the Exodus, Exo-

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dus I–XV; The Ten Commandments, Exodus XIX–XX, XXIV, XXXI–XXXIV; Moses and the Rock, Numbers XX; The Serpents in the Wilderness, Numbers XXI; Balaam's Ass, Numbers XXII–XXIV; The Burial of Moses, Deuteronomy XXXIV; The Fall of Jericho, Joshua I–VI; The Judges, Judges II; Gideon's Fleece, Judges VI–VIII; Jephthah's Daughter, Judges XI; Samson, Judges XIII–XIV; Ruth; The Child Samuel, I Samuel I–III; David and Goliath, I Samuel XVII; Jonathan and David and the Cave of Engedi, I Samuel XVIII–XXIV; The Wisdom of Solomon, I Kings III; The Queen of Sheba, I Kings X; Elijah and the Ravens, I Kings XVII; Elijah and Baal's Prophets, I Kings XVIII; Naboth's Vineyard, I Kings XXI; Elijah and the Chariot of Fire, II Kings II; Elisha and the Widow's Son, II Kings IV; The Destruction of Sennacherib, II Kings XIX; Manasseh, II Chronicles XXXIII; The Babylonian Captivity, II Chronicles XXXVI; Esther; Daniel; Jonah.

From the New Testament:

The life of Christ as told in the four Gospels is simple enough to be understood by young children, therefore selections are not given here. The following are the beautiful parables, and a few of the acts of the apostles:

The Sower, St. Matthew XIII, St. Mark IV, St.

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Luke VIII; The Debtor, St. Matthew XVIII; Laborers in the Vineyard, St. Matthew XX; Husbandmen and the Vineyard, St. Matthew XXI; St. Mark XII; St. Luke XX; Marriage of the King's Son, St. Matthew XXII; The Ten Virgins and the Talents, St. Matthew XXV; The Good Samaritan, St. Luke X; The Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son, St. Luke XV; Lazarus, the Beggar, St. Luke XVI; The Good Shepherd, St. John X; The Gate Beautiful, Acts III; Ananias and Sapphira, Acts V; Stephen the Martyr, Acts VI-VIII; Saul's Conversion, Acts IX; Peter's Vision, Acts X; Paul's Shipwreck, Acts XXVII-XXVIII.

For memorizing:

And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, Genesis XLVII, 7-10; I am the Lord Thy God, Exodus XX, 1-17; The Lord bless thee and keep thee, Numbers VI, 24-26; Entreat me not to leave thee, Ruth I, 16-17; Then the Lord answered, Job XXXVIII; Hast thou given the horse strength? Job XXXIX, 19-25; Psalms I, XV, XIX, XXIII, XXIV, XXVII, XXXII, LI, XCI, CIII, CXIX, CXX, CXXXIII; Proverbs III, VI, VIII; And there shall come forth a rod, Isaiah XI, 1-10; Behold my servant, Isaiah XLII, 1-9, Arise, shine for thy light is come, Isaiah LX, 1-5; The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, Isaiah LXI, 1-2; Behold I will send my messenger,

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Malachi III, 1-2; And seeing the multitude, St. Matthew V, 1-2; Behold the fowls of the air, St. Matthew VI, 26-34; My soul doth magnify the Lord, St. Luke I, 46-55; For God so loved the world, St. John III, 16-18; I am the bread of Life, St. John VI, 35-40; I am the Good Shepherd, St. John X, 11-15; Let not your heart be troubled, St. John XIV; I am the true vine, St. John XV, 1-14; For I am persuaded, Romans VIII, 38-39; O, the depth of the riches, Romans XI, 33-36; Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, I Corinthians XIII; And I saw a new heaven, Revelation XXI; And he shewed me a pure river, Revelation XXII.” \*

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\* The Children's Reading, Frances Jenkins Olcott.

“O almighty and most merciful Father, who has promised children as a reward to the righteous, and hast given them to me as a testimony of Thy mercy, and an engagement of my duty; be pleased to be a father unto them, and give them healthful bodies, understanding souls, and sanctified spirits, that they may be Thy servants and children, all their days. Let a great mercy and providence lead them through the dangers and temptations and ignorances of their youth, that they may never run into folly, and the evils of an unbridled appetite. So order the accidents of their lives, that, by good education, careful tutors, holy example, innocent company, prudent counsel, and Thy restraining grace, their duty to Thee may be secured in the midst of a crooked and untoward generation: and if it seem good in Thy eyes, let me be enabled to provide conveniently for the support of their persons, that they may not be destitute and miserable in my death; or if Thou shalt call me off from this world by a more timely summons, let their portions be, Thy care, mercy, providence, over their bodies and souls: and may they never live vicious lives, nor die violent or untimely deaths; but let them glorify Thee here with a free obedience, and the duties of a whole life; that, when they have served thee in their generations, and have profited the Christian commonwealth, they may be coheirs with Jesus, in the glories of Thy eternal kingdom, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ.” AMEN.

—JEREMY TAYLOR.

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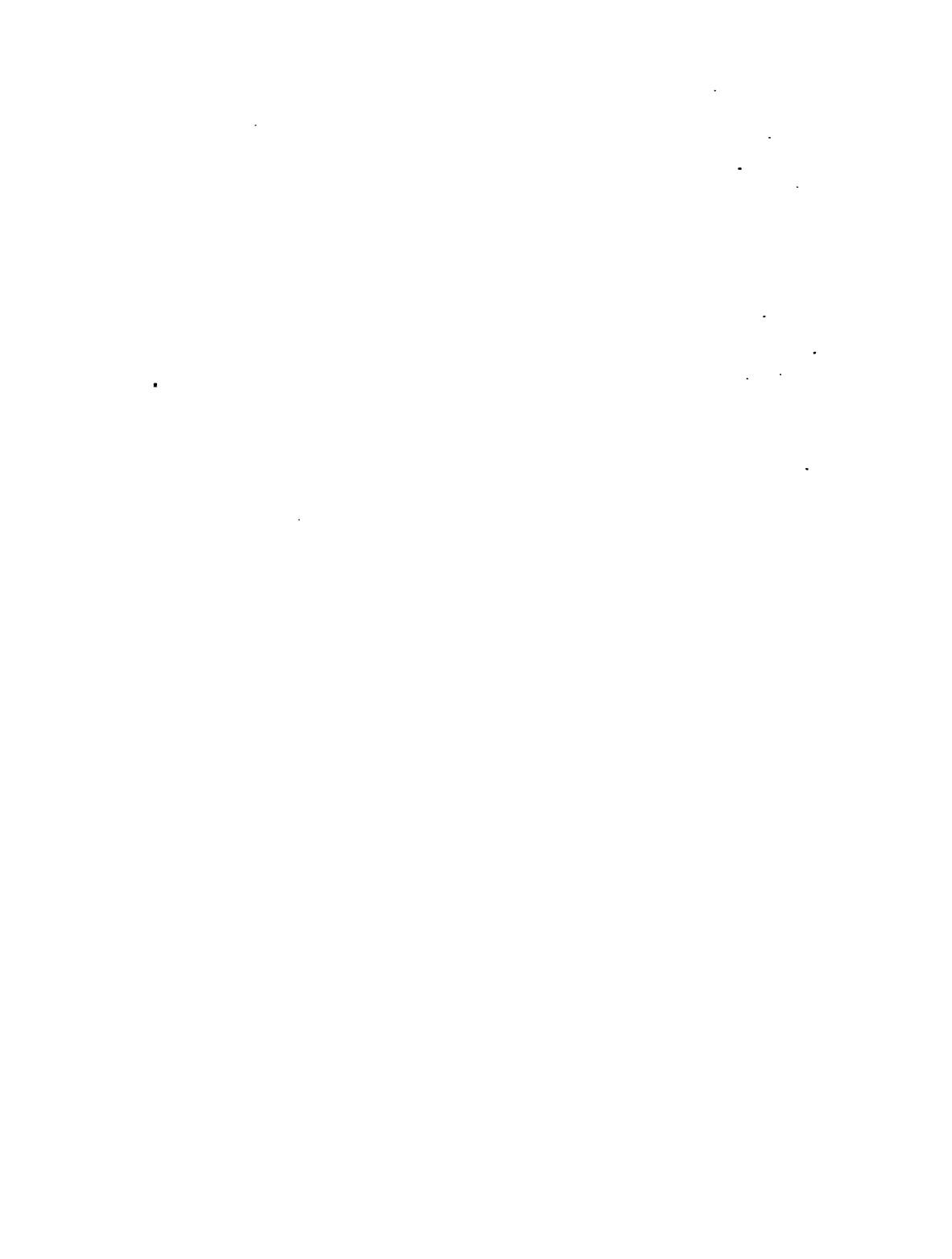
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